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Keys of
Memory
and Affection

By
Caroline May.

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LAYS OF
MEMORY AND AFFECTION
THE SEASONS AND THE SEA
THE BEATITUDES ETC

BY
CAROLINE MAY


NEW YORK
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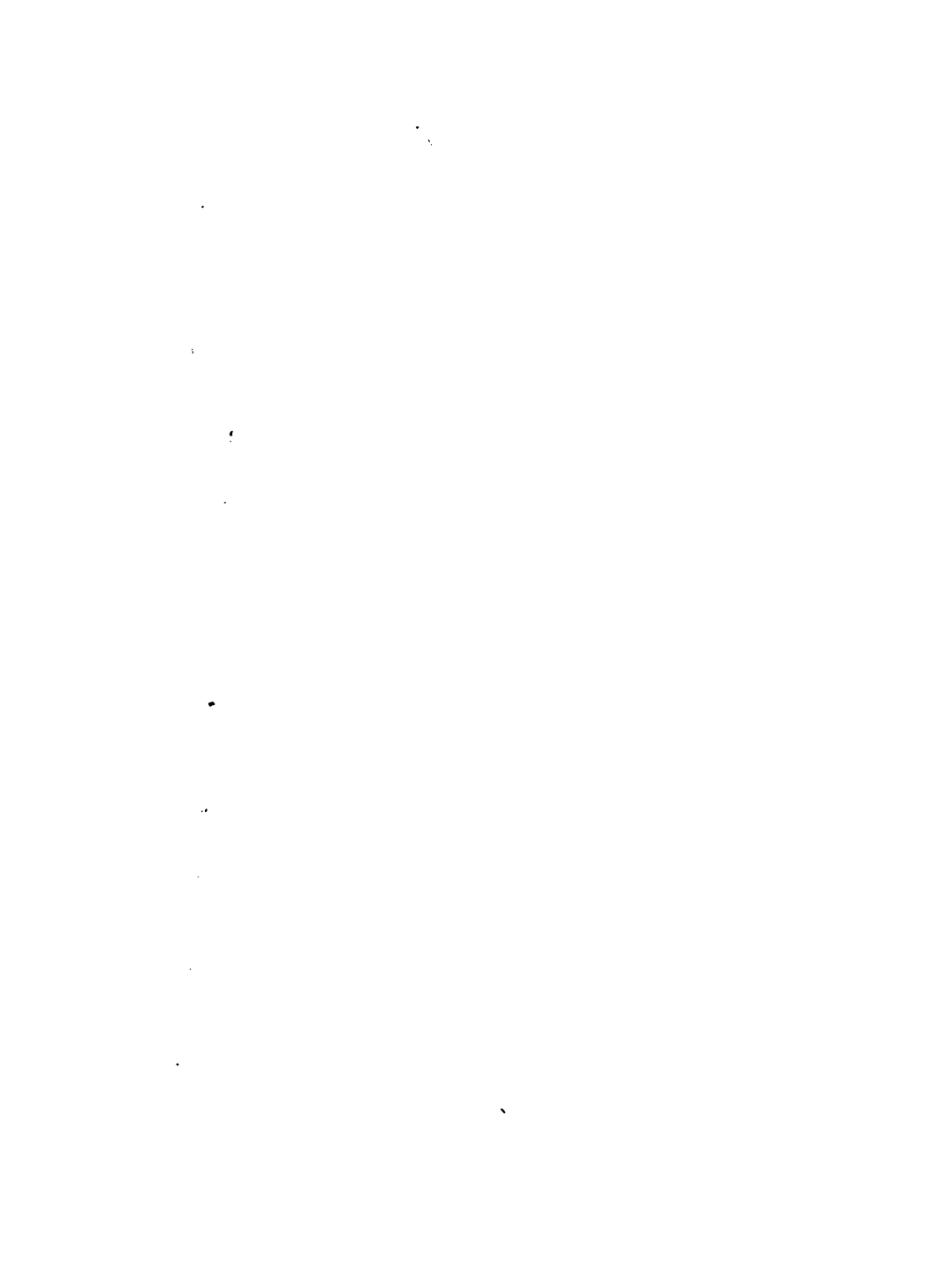
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AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
TO MY LIFE-LONG FRIENDS
THE SCHUYLER SISTERS
(MARRIED AND UNMARRIED),
DAUGHTERS OF THE LATE PHILIP SCHUYLER, ESQ.,
OF PELHAM.



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MEMORY AND AFFECTION.

THE TEMPLE.

“ Those bricky towers,
The which on Themmes’ brode aged back do ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,
There whilome wont the Templar Knights to bide,
Till they decayed through pride.”

—EDMUND SPENSER, 1596.

PART I.

BETWEEN old Fleet Street and old father Thames
Standeth the Temple : cut off* from the strife
Of streaming throngs that each the other stems,
Throughout the Strand’s dense overflow of life.

Amid a labyrinth of lanes it stands,
Of stone-paved courts and houses black with age,
Where learned heads and law-inscribing hands,
The wars of justice with injustice wage.

These studious courts, walled in from city crowds,
The thoughtful trav’ler treads with footsteps slow;
The misty past his memory enshrouds
With phantoms of a visionary show.

Ghosts of the great departed hovering near,
Breathe a cold tremor on the silent air ;

* “The Temple, from a Greek word signifying *to cut off*, is a liberty, or district, between Fleet Street and the Thames.”

As when one walks a graveyard, dank and drear,
 'Mid stones once graven with eulogiums fair.

And yet the precincts of the Temple, give
 Few signs to help the lover of past years
To find who, here, in fame so fugitive,
 Relinquished life with all its hopes and fears.

A simple tablet tells the traveller
 That one who glowed with genuine poet fire,
Poor, vain, yet guileless Goldsmith, prone to err,
 Lies buried near the north wall of the choir.

And as he enters through the massive door
 Of the dark, solemn Round Church, there he sees
In brazen armor, sculptured on the floor,
 The Templars' monumental effigies.

Seven storied centuries have lived and died
 Since the Knights Templar, an intrepid band,
Brought to old London their chivalric pride,
 After their crusades in the Holy Land.

The end attempted and attained by them,
 To rescue from the Turks the Christians' fane,—
The Holy Temple at Jerusalem,
 The Holy Sepulchre where Christ had lain.

And here, seven hundred years ago, they came ;
 Made this their resting-place, their home, their
 shrine ;

This their "New Temple," after that whose name
Was dearly battled for in Palestine.

Years after they were gone, yet long ago,
The first Great Fire of London, demon-like,
Ran through the streets with blazing overthrow,
Stopped at the Temple, and forbore to strike.

Stories like these, truth mingled with romance,
(For what without romance are Fame's reports),
The interest of the traveller enhance,
As wrapped in thought he treads these quiet courts.

Time, the iconoclast, who crumbles stone,
And brings down to the dust strong flinty towers,
Leaves grey tradition and romance alone,
To linger on in poets' dreamy bowers.

But this old edifice, so nobly planned,
Shows not the touch of the destroyer, Time ;
He loves the Temple, and with tender hand
Helps man restore, with reverence sublime.

THE TEMPLE.

"O Templa quam dilecta."

PART II.

O VENERATED Temple! Who can rest
Within thy walls even a few short hours,
Nor feel thy influence on his soul imprest,
Renewing and inspiring all his powers?

The misty past is all forgotten quite,
The present is so rich in rapture sweet;
No vision intervenes of Red Cross knight,
Trampling the aisles with spurs upon his feet.

The sunshine of a summer morn pours through
The lofty windows, with its holy chrism,
Their storied panes, of every primal hue,
Play with the rays of sunlight like a prism.

Rare the assembly bathed in that fair light;
Judges and counsellors, august and grave,
Students and statesmen strong in learning's might,
Men of all ages, crowd the spacious nave.

Along the walls, within the chancel's screen,
Or, haply, seated by the altar-rails,
The women, separate, apart, are seen
In tranquil rest—order that never fails.

The opening voluntary now begins,
An aria of Bach's, divinely played ;
Triumphant strain, as if a tried soul wins
Victory o'er foes that would its life invade.

The white-robed choristers, young boys and men,
Come pacing in ; and, bringing up the rear,
The Reader of the Temple comes, and then
The Master, to the whole assembly dear.

For he, the Master, is a safe, sure guide ;
The human heart his study, and his aim
To curb its passions and its earth-born pride,
By faith's strong power, and Heav'n's eternal claim.

The silent crowd gaze upward to his face,
Intent to catch each spirit-searching word ;
Searching yet soothing, with the love and grace
That in Christ's messages are ever heard.

Well-known and honored is the name of Vaughan :
The Master of three hundred years ago,
Compared to him, is like the early dawn
To the full day in clear and cloudless glow.

Yet Hooker, meek of heart, in judgment sound,
Deep thinker, toiling amid care and pain,
Will ever be remembered and renowned
While good old Izaak Walton's "Lives" remain.

THE TEMPLE.

"And farewell goes out sighing."

—SHAKESPEARE.

PART III.

IT was a mild November afternoon ;
No yellow fog, but a soft sunlit haze
Hung in the sky, like Indian-summer's boon,
Which we, in western climes, so love to praise.

I sought the Temple for the last, last time ;
That thought, though ruffling o'er the spirit's calm,
Added a solemn import, half sublime,
To prayer and lesson, to the chant and psalm.

I lingered, fearing I should come no more,
When all was silent but the organ's swell,
Whose diapason seemed to sink and soar,
Uttering my benediction and farewell.

The fading sunset's red and misty light,
The wondrous organ's heart-exploring power,
The coming unknown future, dark as night,
All gave strange emphasis to that one hour.

So with rapt feelings and with noiseless tread,
I glided down the shadowy aisles alone,

Paused for a moment o'er the sculptured dead,
The crossed-legged knights upon the floor of stone.

The verger held the door within his hand,
Impatient at the stranger's long delay ;
So o'er the threshold at his mute command,
With one more backward look, I passed away.

HANDEL'S MESSIAH.

(WITH AN OLD COPY SENT TO A YOUNG MUSICAL GENIUS.)

THIS time-worn book I give to thee,
O young and dear musician,
Is more than music unto me ;
It is romance, tradition—
It is a poem of my life,
Its childhood, youth, and prime ;
Each symphony—each air—is rife
With records of past time.

I was a little child when he,
My music-loving father,
Brought me this very book, to see
If I at once could gather,
And strike out, with my bold young hand,
The "*Comfort ye*" so sweet,
With "*Every valley*," joyous, grand,
Interpretation meet
Of the inspired prophetic strain
Uttered by rapt Isaiah,
When "*hills made low—rough places plain*,"
He saw with the Messiah.

My childhood's bliss it was to please
That father, whose sweet eyes,

With their keen kindling sympathies,
Ran over in surprise ;
Upon my head with partial praise
His hand he would be pressing,
And while I sang old Handel's lays,
He gave me many a blessing.

My father's friend I seem to see,
The eloquent Bethune ;
Whose soul was made of harmony,
Perfect in time and tune.
What golden hours with him were spent,
Over these same old pages ;
"Such music," he would say, "was meant
To last through endless ages."
It never tired us, o'er and o'er
We conned its varied themes,
Until, at heaven's very door,
We seemed to catch the gleams
Of glory, where the "*Lord God*" dwells,
Where angels loud are singing
"*Worthy the Lamb*," where like glad bells
Are "*Hallelujahs*" ringing !
We could not tell which was most dear
Of all we so admired ;
The pathos deep, that brought the tear,
By holy grief inspired,
Of that sublimely mournful strain,
"*He was despised, rejected*,"
Where the sad notes wail forth the pain,
And low sobs are inflected ;—

Or that exalting, happy air,
Pure as a Doric reed,
Glad as "the lark at heaven's gate fair,"
Singing its matin creed,—
"I know that my Redeemer lives";
Music to words replying
With confidence that comfort gives,
To be recalled when dying ;—
Or that triumphant argument
"If God be for us, who
O who can be against us," sent
Like a keen arrow through
The listening heart, that leaps to meet
The octaves downward reaching,
So quaint, so pungent, yet so sweet
In their resistless preaching.

And yet another friend is linked
To this old book, dear boy.
Sure memory must be extinct,
If I forget the joy
With which his meed of praise was paid
To this great work of Handel,
That threw, he thought, all else in shade
As doth the sun a candle.
My own friend and my father's, why,
Methinks I see him now !
The dark brown wig, the mild dark eye,
The broad and marble brow.
Of an old-fashioned courtesy
The dignified possessor ;

Yet of a marked simplicity—
This learned, grave Professor.*
Deep versed in old Hebraic lore,
In Greek and Latin skilled,
A critic in the Muses' store,
And with sweet music filled.
My happy lot it was, full oft,
My privilege, and pleasure,
With Handel's airs, the grand or soft,
To soothe his evening leisure.

My father, and my father's friends,
Have gone long since from earth ;
But lingering, loving Memory spends
Her heart-rhymes on their worth.
To thee I send both book and rhymes,
O young and dear musician ;
That dull may prove my tuneless chimes
I have a just suspicion ;
Not so the time-worn book : I know
How quickly thou wilt find
The kindred soul within thee, glow
'Neath Handel's master-mind.

* Samuel H. Turner, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Hebrew and Biblical Literature in the Episcopal Seminary, New York.

MEMORY'S MORNING MUSIC.

RINGING through my ears on first awaking,
As if music was with morning born,
Come sweet melodies, the gray veil breaking,
That the silent, shadowy night had worn.

Like the statue of the classic story,
Memnon-like, my soul is played upon
By the herald gleams that bring the glory
Of the full-orbed and harmonious sun.

Bars of symphonies by grand Beethoven,
Strains of Handel's oratorios ;
But more often tunes well interwoven
With the thoughts that came ere night's repose.

Tunes that bring the words of holy Keble,
Falling on the heart like heavenly dew ;
Freshening drowsy powers by sleep made feeble,
Stirring up the soul to worship true.

Tunes that sing the strains of happy Bonar,
Plaintive minors mingling with the joy ;
Love of Jesus, and Jehovah's honor,
Themes of his perennial employ.

Hymns of saintly and seraphic Faber,
Bells at even ring no sweeter chime ;
Fervid, strong, yet flowing without labor,
To the harps of angels keeping time.

Never are the melodies that haunt me,
Morning after morning, quite the same ;
But, if grave or gay, they all enchant me
With their soothing, and joy-giving aim.

In the world of music, for me ever,
Lives a viewless but beloved throng ;
And without my striving or endeavor,
Memory is thus made a home for song.

THE SEA-SIDE HOME.

THE gloaming pale is glimmering through
My heavy chestnut-trees,
And in the twilight I review,
With mind and heart at ease,
The pictures, fresh in memory,
Of that sweet home beside the sea.

So beautiful, that home itself,
Paneled with carven pine ;
Each ceiling, wall, and stair, and shelf,
Of some new bright design :
“Windows of narrow lights” and wide,
Letting in joy on every side.

The broad verandas all around,
Like summer parlors, are
Open to every sight and sound
Of beauty, near and far ;
Never without one sheltered nook,
For friendly talk or quiet book.

The host and hostess, graceful, good,
And rich in many a prize,
Have learned the art best understood
By those whom God makes wise,

Of deepening channels, full and free,
For tideless hospitality.

And there they gladly welcome friends,
And make them all so glad,
That when the transient tarrying ends,
They think farewell most sad.
But memory never says farewell,
As I to-night can truly tell.

Again I look out on the west,
From that dear portico,
And see the shores of Shrewsbury dressed
With all the sunset's glow ;
Clouds purple, edged and lined with gold,
And wafts of color manifold.

The calm, smooth river will reflect
The upper light of blue ;
While the green sedgy isles are decked
With veils of misty hue :
The clouds clear off with twilight's hush,
But not the sky's deep crimson blush.

I pass round to the east, and there
I face the far-spread sea,
Where the dim sails of vessels fair
Like rose-leaves seem to be,
Gliding in tranquil, tender bliss,
Flushed, to the last, with sunset's kiss.

Above a wall of vapor gray,
Where sky and ocean meet,
Now comes a scene that melts away
The soul in rapture sweet,—
By slow, pathetic throbs of light,
The full moon rises into sight.

She lays her golden rings upon
The white and glittering beach,
And crowns the breakers, one by one,
As fast and far they reach,
Till, lifting up their snowy hands,
They toss their treasures on the sands.

Then a broad road of lambent light
Is laid upon the sea ;
And while the moon attains her height
Of radiant majesty,
The waves, in chorus full and strong,
Their moonlight symphonies prolong.

The gloaming pale has passed away :
My darksome chestnut-trees
Whisper together as they sway
In the soft, swelling breeze :
“ Let not the music of the sea
Silence *our* lulling melody.”

ASHBRITTLE RECTORY.

IN that sweet southern English county,
The shire of Somerset,
Where all the forms of Nature's bounty,
And beauty, too, are met,
It was my happy lot one even
To travel, facing west,
And see the sun go down in heaven,
So gorgeously dressed
In clouds of many-colored splendor,
It dazzled sight and sense,
And filled my soul with love most tender
And deepest reverence.
And oh, I thought, how strangely slandered
Has been this English sky ;
What sunsets, wheresoe'er I've wandered,
Can this grand glow outvie !
While thus my mind, by fits and sallies,
Reviewed bright sunsets gone,
O'er lofty hills, and through deep valleys,
I travelled on and on,
Until, with gladness not a little,
The journey had been long—
The rectory of sweet Ashbittle
Was reached at even-song.

Refreshing as the choicest nectar,
Renewing tired life,
Was the kind welcome of the rector
And his beloved wife :
A lady of most perfect sweetness,
Of dignity and truth,
Of gentleness, and just completeness ;
Reminding one, in sooth,
Of Wordsworth's "nobly-planned," rare woman,
His verse describes so well,
Or Tennyson's half super-human,
Yet life-drawn, "Isabel."
He was from Oxford ; and his college
Was dear as his own name,
But though a man of varied knowledge
He nothing cared for fame.
To the church rubric strict and stable
In spirit and in form ;
And in his house most hospitable,
And genial and warm.
Home and the church his dear dominions,
He ruled there like a king
His independent, bold opinions
Held sway o'er everything.

And sweet dominions were they, truly,
That church and home of his !
The church, though decorated newly,
Had stood for centuries ;
The tall, slim spire, with finger steady
Up-pointing to the sky,

With mute monition to make ready
For the pure home on high.
The old green churchyard filled with stories,
Graven on crumbling stone,
Of ancient families, whose glories
With long-past years had flown ;
The knotted yew-tree, time-worn sentry,
Keeping a faithful guard
Over the narrow rustic entry,
That led to the churchyard ;
Oh ! happy, thought I, is the preacher
Who, through that moss-grown porch,
Allures his flock to the Great Teacher,
The Shepherd of the Church.

That age-bent yew, so gnarled and knotted,
Looked down a gentle hill,
And over fields, with white sheep dotted,
Reposing at their will.
And from the yew a lane descended
Right to the rectory grounds,
Where shrubberies and song-birds blended,
All summer scents and sounds.
And in the garden's very centre
The happy mansion stood,
Looking as if naught e'er could enter
But what was pure and good.
On one side fruits in various stages
Of ripeness, and of size,
Pears, apricots, and smooth greengages,
Hung in most tempting wise

Trained to the walls ; while, in due order,
The kitchen-herbs were spread ;
And gooseberry-bushes flushed the border
With amber and with red.

Upon the other side, flowers scented
With freshest sweets the air ;
Wreathing the windows, or contented
Upon the terrace fair.
For terraces the garden levelled
With greenest grass in-let,
And there the fragrant blossoms revelled ;
Masses of mignonette,
And heliotrope in rich redundancy,
And blue forget-me-not,
Roses in generous abundance,
And lilies without spot ;
Geraniums, in spicy bushes,
Of every Christian name ;
Double carnations, whose deep blushes
Crimsoned with ardent flame ;
And jessamine with white stars shining,
And snowy clematis,
Like fair twin sisters, intertwining
Their beauty and their bliss.

Under a walnut-tree that shaded
One of the terrace seats,
We sat sometimes till daylight faded,
Drinking the garden sweets ;
And pondering in easeful leisure
The distant views so fair,

Where many an artistic treasure
Lay outlined here and there.
Blue hills with purple valleys cloven,
Dark forests at their base,
And towers and hamlets interwoven
With lines of waving grace.
A meadow from the garden slanted
Down to a deep ravine,
Which by a babbling brook was haunted,
A brook heard more than seen.
A fallen tree its length extended
Over the runlet's bed,
And thitherward one morn we wended,
The sun hot overhead,
To find a cooling shade to rest in
Upon the fallen tree,
And watch the dragon-flies, all drest in
Their green-gold panoply.
And there one read, and others hearkened
To tales of coming war ;
And how the continent was darkened
By the French emperor
And Prussian king misapprehending
Some diplomatic cause ;
Behold how great a fire ascending
From trifles light as straws.
And doubly peaceful seemed the murmur
Of Nature's happy breath,
The while we thought of feuds grown firmer,
Of bloodshed and of death.*

* The writer had just come from Paris at the time of the Franco-Prussian war, 1870.

O most delicious the seclusion
Of that fair rectory,
Free from the city's forced intrusion,
And vain society !
Five little ones with nursery riot
Of laughter and of play,
Broke merrily the balmy quiet
Of the long summer day.
And if so tranquil an existence
Seemed sometimes growing tame,
Books, guests, or letters from a distance,
Kindled anew life's aim ;
Or college—"fellow," unexpected
Walked in with glad "all hail";
With wit and wisdom well collected,
And many a college tale.

No house stood near, the nearest neighbor
Lived four miles off or five ;
But then it was no task or labor
To take a summer drive
With well-trained horses, sleek and steady ;
I shall recall but one—
The fair soft evening we made ready
To dine at Bathealton.
The Court, an old romantic dwelling,
Stood amid lordly trees,
Whose restless leaves were ever telling
Tales to the whispering breeze.
Within its halls there hung old pictures
By painters of renown,

Whose works were high above all strictures,
Or critic's nod or frown.
What mattered flattery or abhorrence,
To men of inborn might,
Like Reynolds, Gainsboro, or Lawrence,
Who worked for truth and right.
There was a portrait, full-length figure,
From Gainsboro's melting brush,
So real in its warmth and vigor,
It seemed to breathe and blush.

Sweet was our evening in that mansion,
Sweet were the ladies there,
A beauty of the soul's expansion
Traced on their foreheads fair.
Long will they live in recollection
With him, our host so kind ;
Open and frank to win affection,
Cultured in heart and mind.

But time will fail, if I endeavor
To sketch in colors bright
The various pictures that will ever
Glow in my heart's warm light ;
Each serious talk, each merry clamber,
Each baby face, each room,
Are all preserved in memory's amber
Of ever fresh perfume.

HARGEST RIDGE.

ONE afternoon, beneath a summer sky,
Whose snowy clouds just tempered heat,
We roamed along, dear Isabel and I,
A rural hamlet's rocky street.

Then up a narrow, fragrant, sweet-briar lane,
Unlatched a gate on mossy knoll,
That opened for us the broad lower plane
Of Hargest Ridge, our final goal.

Masses of waving bracken covered o'er
The bosom of the gradual steep ;
Our path through which was a smooth velvet floor
Of grass cropped close by wandering sheep.

Slowly we climbed the fern-lined path, until
We gained almost the highest ledge,
Lofty enough our wishes to fulfil,
And drink new life from Hargest Ridge.

Fresh life and joy were in the air we breathed ;
No winds of heaven could purer be :
The while from bracken, furze, and broom en-
wreathed,
Came wafts of whispering melody.

The distant beacon hills of Brecknock lay
Blue on the horizon to the right ;
Nearer, yet distant still, the outline gray
Of the Welsh mountains, loomed in sight.

Upon our left, most delicately fair,
Rose Malvern's range of hill and wood ;
In front were seen two dark peaks, grim and bare,
Known as the " Butts of Robin Hood."

Beyond these guardian hills, a level space,
Where sunbeams, ever and anon,
Revealed green meadows, streams of winding grace,
And spires the gold gleams rested on.

For sun and clouds, that perfect afternoon,
Linked their effects of light and shade,
To give the landscape an especial boon,
Fresh beauty on each feature laid.

There was the quaint old church of Huntington,
And there the ruins, ivy-grown,
Of an old border-castle, which had won
A long-past glory, now unknown.

Long rested we upon that happy hill :
The holy calm around, above,
The solitary grandeur, seemed to fill
Our inmost souls with rapturous love.

We chose for our return another way,
Along a wild and deep ravine,

Clad with thorn-bushes, and with alders gray,
And flowers too sweet to die unseen.

The tormantilla's yellow star was there,
And scabious of dark ruby hue,
And stately fox-gloves, and wild-roses fair,
And harebells of cerulean blue.

Our path then turned into the "Forest Wood,"
Dense with majestic tall old trees,
Whose moss-grown trunks and twisted boughs had
stood
The stress of storms for centuries.

Near the dark wood a merry stream ran on,
Whose waters were so clear and bright,
The polished pebbles underneath them, shone
Like jewels in refracted light.

Through lanes and fields our homeward way we took,
Oft looking back, and listening oft,
To the glad music of the gurgling brook,
Like woman's laughter, clear and soft.

The fair home, standing in a noble park,
We reached before the evening came.
Dear summer days, when twilight's door of dark
Bars not too soon the sunset's flame.

How perfect the serene repose that fell
On entering that rich domain !
Far from the world, yet knowing it full well,
The dwellers there in quiet reign.

In quiet, but not dullness, for the life
Of quickening intellect was there,
High thought, wide culture, and refinement, rife
With all that noble natures wear.

And merry little children made the place
Resound at times with noisy glee ;
One, a rare boy, faultless in form and face,
Beautiful Bertram Romilly.

The gardens were the dear delight of those
Who ruled like queens amid the bowers ;
One for spring blossoms, one a realm of rose,
And one for bright autumnal flowers.

Islands of rhododendrons, from the sea
Of emerald turf, rose full and round ;
And glimpses blue of mountain scenery
Varied the undulating ground.

Above the gardens and beyond, there towered a
grove
Of heavy grand old beechen trees,
So thick their roof, that one might thither rove
Fearless of rain, or sun, or breeze.

Sweet home of beauty, comfort, and content !
How fragrant is the memory,
Tender and loving, of the glad days spent
In that dear home across the sea.

THE DEANERY.

"Obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory and her siren daughters."

—MILTON.

O RARE Dame Memory ! kind and gracious be,
And bring thy siren daughters ; there are
three

Whose blessed influence is not strange to me.

Well do I know the clear-eyed, constant Truth,
And Love, all bright with never-fading youth,
And Music, whose sweet voice is thine, in sooth.

Aided by them, I'll sing in numbers glad
Of a time-honored mansion, where I had
Some joyful days when life was growing sad.

Not far from the slim winding river Taff,
Whose silver waves the bending rushes quaff,
Stands the old Deanery of Landaff.

I see ev'n now the windows stretching wide,
The deep-eaved gables where the swallows hide,
And the tall pile of chimneys either side.

Glancing around, with no time to explore,
I hasten through the hospitable door,
Up the broad stairway to the second floor.

Within a spacious salon, rich and fair,
Yet with a home-like, unambitious air,
That made one feel Content and Peace lived there,

The Dean's wife greeted me with cordial grace,
Gave generous welcome to that favored place,
And sealed the welcome with a warm embrace.

Original, decided, yet most kind,
It was a joy to meet her well-stored mind,
Her keen wit, tempered by her taste refined ;

Yet more, her heart, so fervent and so pure,
With its large lovingness, so strong and sure,
Hoping and trusting, in sweet faith secure.

A man of noble bearing was the Dean ;
Quiet, and gentle, and of serious mien,
With a bright, genial smile, and brow serene.

The house was filled with choice memorials ;
Portraits, books, sketches, hung upon the walls
Of all the rooms, and staircases, and halls.

Mementoes of the royal and the grand,
The good, the wise, the learned of the land ;
And of the loved and lost, heaven-garnered band.

The names of Stanley, Leycester, Hare, we know,
Their honored lives, and homes of long ago ;
Norwich, and Alderley, and Hurstmancaux.

Long would I linger in the Deanery,
But outside views must not neglected be,
For they are full of pastoral poetry.

The quiet Taff sends out a merry rill
To sing and laugh beneath the Deanery hill,
Where lie the fragrant gardens, calm and still.

The smaller one, a lawn with many a bed
Of bright-lipped blossoms, whose sweet breathings
shed
A welcome silent, dear as fond words said.

Guelder-rose, myrtles, laurels, thick and tall,
Hedged in the lawn on one side, a green wall
That cast its sheltering guardianship o'er all.

The larger garden stood apart from this—
Not known to every one its dreamy bliss—
But one who knew could never be remiss

In seeking out its spacious solitude,
Where humming honey-bees, or tender brood
Of nestling linnets, would alone intrude.

Bees loved the hawthorn, lavender, and thyme,
The honeysuckle, and the flowering lime,
Whose scented boughs were their most genial clime.

And birds would touch, despite the gardener's care,
The interdicted fruit-trees that grew there,
The purple plum, and yellow juicy pear.

Leaving this sunny garden's fruit-decked zone,
Passing a grass-plot, walled in all alone,
Then through a gate, and down some steps of stone,

You enter on a wilderness of shade ;
A narrow path beneath old beeches made,
Whose mossy roots, twisted and gnarled, o'erlaid

The bank above, a lofty leaf-clad bank,
Covered with various ferns and ivies, rank
And rich with fairy dews they nightly drank.

Below, the bank was steeper still, but slanted
Into delicious emerald meadows, haunted
By the stream's voice that sang as if enchanted.

On one side, these elysian meadows bound
The wide church-yard, where many a grassy mound,
And marble cross, fill up the sacred ground.

And in their midst, near to the terrace gate,
Massive, majestic, and of ancient date,
Stands the Cathedral, in its solemn state.

Solemn, yet joyful,—for its golden spire
Pierces the low clouds like a flame of fire,
Lifting the heart up higher still, far higher.

And ever and anon through night and day,
The soulful bells ring out a holy lay,
Teaching the happy earth to praise and pray.

And now, dear Paradise, a long farewell :
Between us broad Atlantic billows swell,
But in my heart, safe haven, thou shalt dwell.

O rare "Dame Memory," Milton did not need
Thee to invoke for any helpful meed ;
His muse was Heaven-inspired, a magic reed.

But thou hast been, and shalt be aye, my friend :
I pray thee, and thy "siren daughters," lend
Your aid still further, till my life shall end.

A RECOLLECTED RAMBLE.

WE shall never all together be
As on that summer day,
When gathered in that home of love,
Where angel-blessings lay ;
That home of softest sunshine,
Of beauty and of youth,
Of joy and wit and warmth of heart,
Of innocence and truth.

That summer day, how bright it was,
But how quiet and how still ;
The very wild winds hushed their songs
Upon the woody hill,
And softly sobbed at intervals,
As if too sad to tell
We should never all together be,
Though they knew and felt it well.

But a shadow, a presentiment,
Was cast upon us all,
Though none would speak of it aloud,
Lest our burdened hearts should fall ;
So kindly smiles shone round about,
And merry tones were heard,
And sweet unselfish cheerfulness
Made music of each word.

And a happy band we were, although
We felt that partings threw
A misty dimness o'er Hope's eyes,
Which gave the future view
A dreary aspect, dark and cold,
An almost wintry shade ;
And over friendship's deathless joy
A solemn sadness laid.

A happy band we were, for love,
And confidence, and truth,
And sympathy (that spirit bond
Sought for in age and youth),
Joined their strong powers together then,
To weave a magic spell,
Which might keep our hearts unchanged
Though parted we might dwell.

But united now, we rambled forth
Over a pine-clad hill,
And where a stream went rushing past
An old forsaken mill,
Sparkling with foam, and leaping up
In wild and noisy glee,
As if it were from use of man
Rejoicing to be free.

The spicy fragrance of the fern
The breezes wafted by,
The delicate and fairy clouds
That floated o'er the sky,

Like fancies o'er a poet's mind,
So beautiful and bright ;
The balmy quiet of the air,
The green and leafy light,

The influence of all we saw
Upon our spirits fell,
And filled them with that loving joy
That words so poorly tell ;
'Tis scarcely joy, for sighs and tears
Its thrilling power attend,
Yet how could sadness such delight,
Such grateful rapture send !

Some of us on a mossy trunk
Sat in the shade to rest ;
Others stood by the water's brink,
In contemplation blest ;
Some wandered farther up the stream,
Where it was still and deep,
Where vines in wild luxuriance
Covered its borders steep.

And some, not weary, crossed the bridge
To seek a well-known spot,
The dearest, most familiar haunt,
Which should not be forgot ;
Where the same stream moved calmly by
With a sweet mournful tone,
Singing the summer woods to sleep,
With music all its own.

Oh, every step we took that day
We shall remember long,
When hearts beat all in unison,
In true affection strong ;
And long remember, too, the home
Which smiled on our return,
As if naught e'er could enter it
But what must cease to mourn.

And now that home is desolate,
Those blessed ones are fled ;
The wind goes sighing there at night,
By mournful memory led,
But finds the gentle hearts that loved
To listen to her lay,
All gone,—so, shivering through the trees,
She moans, and dies away !

CRUGER ISLAND.

A PERFECT picture who can paint
Of Nature's loveliness,
Beauty, that makes the spirit faint
With ardent love's excess?
Not I, alas ! or in a little while
I'd paint a picture of the Cruger Isle.

Pass o'er the causeway now with me
That leads from the main land,
Into this Eden ; and there see
How wild flowers on each hand,
Of their own will, with many a blush and smile,
Point out the road-path to the Cruger Isle.

An angle to the left, then turn,
And on a gentle slope,
The fair estate you will discern,
Of wide and varied scope ;
Deep eaves and gables, of an old-time style,
The sunny mansion of the Cruger Isle.

By the broad entrance steps are ranged
In summer sunshine bright,
Sweet shrubs, from greenhouse-shelter changed
To open-air delight ;

Oranges, myrtles, lilies of the Nile,
Breathing full welcome to the Cruger Isle.

Acres of emerald turf, o'er which
In shadowy groups, are seen
Tall elms, and pines, and cedars, rich
With every tint of green,
Stretching towards the river's smooth defile
Where rocks and fir-clad cliffs, bound Cruger
Isle.

Beyond the river, grand and high,
Extending far away,
The Kaatskill mountains to the sky
Lift up their heads so gray ;
There dark storms frown, there quivering sun-
beams smile,
A never-wearying joy to Cruger Isle.

A worthy poem who can write
Of perfect womanhood,
Matured and cultured, strong and bright,
Gentle, and kind, and good ?
Not I, alas ! or in a little while,
I'd sketch the lady of the Cruger Isle.

THE FLORIST'S WINDOW.

THINKING of those sad words, *no more*,
I walked along the city street ;
With parting pain my heart was sore,
And wounded heart made weary feet.

Not one familiar face I saw,
But all were strange, the old and young ;
And no diversion could I draw
From the sad thoughts that o'er me hung.

No smiling eyes from out the crowd
Met mine, with old remembrances,
Like sunshine through a rifted cloud,
To give a momentary ease.

Bright windows, with a grand display
Of gleaming silks and satins rare,
Stopped many a young girl on her way,
To gaze upon the fabrics fair.

Others were tempted to stand still,
Caught by some painter's noted name,—
The which, perchance, e'en more than skill,
Gave to the picture worth and fame.

But nothing drew my steps aside,
Pictures or diamonds or dress,—
When, suddenly, my grief's stern pride
Was melted into thankfulness.

All unawares my vision fell
Upon a window filled with flowers ;
And o'er my spirit came a spell
Of warm love for this world of ours.

Baskets of roses hung therein :
The monthly rose, with healthy glow ;
The maiden-blush, to brides akin ;
The Marechal Neil, and Jacqueminot.

Velvet-leaved heart's-ease clustered there,
In every rich and radiant hue ;
The darkest purple, primrose fair,
Orange and lilac, white and blue.

And there were golden daffodils,
All eloquent of April's praise ;
And violets, whose breath instils
Memories of childhood's merry days.

This generous window on the street,
Gently dissolved my thoughts of pain.
In life so fresh, and love so sweet,
That downcast Faith sprang up again.

DISTANT MUSIC.

OVER the water is an isle
Of gardens and of bowers,
Where weary men from town beguile
Their recreating hours.

And there, each summer afternoon,
Sweet bands of music come,
The flute, the cornet, the bassoon,
The trumpet, and the drum.

Delicious music they discourse ;
And sometimes the kind breeze
Brings it with keen and pliant force
Over the forest trees.

Sometimes the wind is contrary,
And will not let me hear ;
Wafting the full-toned harmony
Out o'er the ocean drear.

But even then I catch the beat
That marks the time afar ;
And sometimes, still more clear and sweet,
The cadence of a bar,

The throb upon the air, the phrase
That intermits and halts ;
Just hinting Chopin's wizard ways
In some delirious waltz.

Again there comes a piercing strain
Of love, hope, wild despair,
Touching one's own heart with the pain
Of passionate Schubert.

Anon the sweet wind this way flies,
Then, unimpeded, roll
Beethoven's grand rich harmonies
Into my very soul.

And thus, afar from noisy throngs,
My joy is more than theirs ;
While wordless serenades and songs
Steal on me unawares.

I bless the summer winds that come,
On whose soft wings are borne
The messages of flute and drum,
Of clarionet and horn.

TO LONGFELLOW.

(ON HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY.)

O NOBLE "*Poet, Prophet, Seer*,"*
The honored day is drawing near,
When all whom thou dost love the best,
Children, and friends, and welcome guest,
Gather around thee to combine
Music and flowers and love divine,
From old and young, from grave and merry,
To bless with greetings most benign,
The twenty-seventh of February.

Would I could pay a tribute meet
To mingle with their homage sweet!
Would that my offering sincere
Of silent speech might reach thine ear,
And tell thee of the life-long debt
I owe to thee, and shall owe yet—
Uncancelled owe, till life is spent.
We *re-pay* only what is *lent*;
But thou, with lavish hand, hast given
The wealth consigned to thee by heaven,
And I, with grateful heart, explore

* "*Prometheus* ; or, *The Poet's Forethought*."

The undiminished, golden store,
A heritage for evermore.

What wisdom dwells within thy pages,
Suggesting counsel for all ages !
The worth of honest work, though rude ;
The beauty of forgiving wrong ;
The power of silent fortitude,
Nobly "*to suffer, and be strong.*" *
What lovely forms are wrought by thee !
Fadeless they hang on Memory's walls,
Like some rare storied tapestry,
Such as adorned old Norman halls.

Sweet, tender, true "Evangeline !"
Her story of itself, I ween,
Is full of paintings, rarer far
Than many boasted galleries are ;
And if I were Gustave Doré,
I'd take the maiden of Grand Pré,
The village sunshine and its pride,
The filial daughter, blushing bride,
And paint through every varied scene,
Sweet, tender, true Evangeline.

Then, too, the portraits that are hung
Within the parlor of that "Inn," †
Where tales were told, and songs were sung,
With "*interludes*" of merry din.

* "The Light of Stars."

† "Tales of a Wayside Inn."

Never did clear-eyed Chaucer draw
The pilgrims that his fancy saw,
With bolder outlines, softer grace,
Than thou hast given to every face.
The calm, pure Friend, "Elizabeth,"
Waiting for what the "Spirit" saith ;
And her quaint lover, "John Estaugh,"
Directed by no other law
Than God's still whisper in his breast,
The Quaker's law of love and rest.

How richly do thy colors glow
That painted beautiful "Priscilla,"—
The English snowdrop, pure as snow,—
Thinking how western winters fill her
With memories of England's clime,
Of lanes, and fields, and hedgerows gay
With blossoms, sweet at any time,
But sweeter now, so far away !
"Miles Standish" and "John Alden," stand
From out the picture, bold and grand ;
For pilgrims from their native land
Are very dear, it seems, to thee ;
Like the Acadian colony,
Or, the truth-loving English Quakers ;
Or those self-exiled Puritans,
Who, cursed by tyrant covenant-breakers,
And caring nothing for their bans,
Crossed the salt sea with willing mind,
And heart made strong by patient faith,

"*The dim, dark sea, so like unto death,
That divides, and yet unites, mankind.*" *
Ah, how those two last lines recall
"The Building of the Ship," and all
The novel beauty of the launch,
Sketched by thy skill so true and stanch ;
And all the marvels of that ode
Whose every rhythm overflowed
With music, and whose swaying motion
Seemed like the breathing of the ocean !

But, as I silently pass through
The gallery of retrospection,
Lingering, here and there, to view
The favorites of my affection,—
I stop before St. Filomena,
The "*lovely lady with the lamp.*" †
Never was angel's brow serenest,
Bearing the undisputed stamp
That messengers from heaven must bear,
When, with heaven's messages made plain,
They carry light and ease and air,
To stifled prisoners of pain.
In Filomena's face we see,
The image of that noble woman,
Who, with strength, courage, modesty,
Skill, and endurance more than human,
Passed through the camp of the Crimea,
And to the wounded and the dying,

* "The Building of the Ship."

† "Santa Filomena."

Brought hope, and health, and holy cheer,
All dangers for herself defying.

But time is flying! I must leave
The speaking eyes of pale "Pandora,"
Where love, joy, sorrow, interweave,
And cast a fateful glamor o'er her.
Yes, time forbids me; yet a word
Must tell the grateful rapture stirred
By many of thy minor songs,
Sung to me now by spirit-tongues;
For they are gone, whose sympathy
Doubled the dear delight to me!
"A wind came up out of the sea,"
What can exceed that melody?
"It passed the churchyard with a sigh,
*And said, not yet, in quiet lie."**

I must no more prolong the theme,
Though half its treasures are untold.
Forgive me, if my verses seem
Not tiresome only, but—"too bold."†
And let me, like an unknown friend,
True birthday greetings to thee send;
That "*evermore upon thy way*
The unseen Christ"‡ may be thy stay;
Thy stay, thy staff, thy joy, thy light,
Making thine age like noonday bright.

* "*Daybreak.*"

† "*Moderari Salutaris.*"

‡ "*Hymn*" on his brother's ordination.

A POSY FOR POSIE.*

I SEE a milestone on thy path,
Sweet Posie, dear and sweet !
And there I read, almost with wrath,
That Time can be so fleet,
That sixteen stages are complete
Of thy young life, to-day ;
I would I had an offering meet
On that white stone to lay.

Thy name shall give a hint to me,
I'll make a posy, dear,
And ten and six its flowers shall be,
One for thy every year ;
And on the gleaming milestone here—
This tell-tale of Time's truth—
The floral offering shall appear,
As fragrant as thy youth.

The cowslip for thy babyhood,
Full of soft nodding sleep ;
The daisy, for thy second mood,
Smiling its bright bo-peep ;

* Rosina Emmet, whose name as a gifted young artist is well known ;
lately married to Mr. Arthur Murray Sherwood.

And from among the grass so deep,
Like drops of shining gold,
Gay buttercups the sign shall keep
Of toddling three-year-old.

The snowdrop, pure, and without spot,
The modest violet,
The gentle-eyed forget-me-not,
And darling mignonette,
The record of seven years shall set ;
And for the eight and nine,
The hyacinth, sweet spring-time pet,
And daffodil combine.

For ten, the butterfly sweet-pea,
" *On tip-toe for a flight* ";
For Posie, flying o'er the lea,
Was then a frequent sight ;
Her long hair, golden-brown and bright,
Floating upon the breeze,
A child, a butterfly, a sprite,
Beneath the summer trees !

The heart's-ease and the heliotrope
Come springing up unsought,
Both speaking to one's mind of hope,
And both of budding thought ;
And here is honeysuckle, caught
With jasmine's starry glance ;
Their mingled breath of fragrance fraught
With song and sweet romance.

Alas ! but two more years remain,
And flowers—oh, many a one !
Carnations, of rich crimson stain,
And pale mezereon,
And wall-flowers, smelling of the sun,
And primroses so slight,
Which, when the garish day is done,
Open their hearts to night.

But from the heaps of precious flowers
I must select but two :
For fifteen,—come from thy green bowers,
Thy leaves long pearled with dew,
Pure lily of the valley, few
Can match thy perfumed bells,
Loving to bless, though screened from view,
What tales thy sweetness tells.

The queenly rose must be the last ;
And surely when I see
What grace of womanhood is cast
By sixteen years on thee,
'Tis meet the blushing rose should be
The crown of that bouquet,
Which, with true love's warm constancy,
Is my sole gift to-day.

LITTLE LYDIA.

(OR THE DOLL'S MAMMA.)

NEAR the broad pleasant window, sits
A child just six years old ;
And through the diamond panes, by fits
Come gleams of liquid gold,
Tinting with color, soft and warm,
The sofa, and the child's fair form.

She holds her needle with quaint grace,
For one so very young ;
While gravely the soft oval face
Over her work is hung ;
She has sat there for an hour or more,
Tucking the wee skirt o'er and o'er.

Around the young Mamma, there lies
Her family of dolls ;
One, cradled, sleeps with close-shut eyes,
And one beside her lolls
In lazy mood ; and more than one
Seem waiting till the work is done.

And as the pretty fingers ply
The task herself has set,

She croons some baby lullaby,
The same Nurse sings ev'n yet,
When *dolls' Mamma* is put to rest
In her own swan's-down little nest.

And in her happy, peaceful dreams,
Her dolls are unforgot ;
And visions come, perchance, in gleams,
Of grown-up woman's lot :
Prophetic fancies often weave
In childhood's earnest "make-believe."

THIRD OF JUNE.

(TO A YOUNG FRIEND.)

IS thy birthday third of June?
Why, the very words suggest
All that keepeth time and tune
With a young and happy breast;
Variable May is passed,
Settled sunshine comes at last.

Orange-colored orioles
Breathe their flutes from tree to tree;
Merrily the cat-bird trolls
Many a mocking melody;
And the warbling meadow-lark
Bids one hush, and whisper, "*hark!*"

Scarlet-plumaged tanagers
Float upon the southern breeze;
Robins, wrens, and woodpeckers
Pipe amid the nestful trees;
While from thickets out of sight,
Rings the clear call of "*Bob-White.*"

But if birds bewilder us
With their beauty and their songs,

Flowers are still more numerous ;
Sweet, and honey-breathing throngs,
What a heavenward praise they yield
In the garden and the field !

Rosebuds in profusion peep
Through their leaves with blushes red ;
Lilies hang their heads and sleep
'Mid the odors that they shed,
Lulled by bee and lazy drone
Murmuring their monotone.

Honeysuckles scent the air
With their keen deliciousness ;
Heart's-ease, pinks, syringas fair,
Tulips in their shining dress,
Flowers of every shape and hue
Thrill the senses through and through.

Ferns and grasses intertwine
With a rank luxuriance ;
Wild-rose and wild-columbine,
In the meadow-breezes dance ;
And the buttercups of gold
Woo the daisies,—as of old !

Lavish life, and love, and light,
Mark the joyous third of June ;
Friend beloved, would they might
Mark alike thy morn and noon,
While the evening of thy day
Shall in glory pass away.

LITTLE MAUD.

SWEET little Maud sat upon my knee,
To hear me tell of the stormy sea ;
A dimpled four-year-old child was she.

Her violet eyes were opened wide,
As if half surprised, half terrified,
With strange new feelings she could not hide.

Her red lips were held together tight,
And she kept back the tears that made more bright
Those dear, earnest eyes so filled with light.

For soon I was going far away,
And could not come back for many a day,
Perhaps never more, who, who could say ?

So I told her how often I had crossed
The trackless sea, with faith never lost,
Though many, many times tempest-tossed ;

How oft I had seen the waves run high,
Dashing their foam in the face of the sky,
Deafening one's ears with their wild outcry ;

How passionate winds, that the ships must brave,
Broke like a toy each turbulent wave ;
And how from their fury God only could save.

And I said, "Sweetest Maud, in a little while
I shall be parted, by many a mile,
From all I hold dear in England's isle.

"Yes, over the sea I must shortly sail,
Facing the dreary November gale ;
Oh, the mere thought makes my spirit quail."

And the darling child, who had silent been,
Each word I had spoken drinking in,
With lips compressed, and quivering chin,

Suddenly broke the silence of pain,
A bright thought darting into her brain,
"But why don't you ever go by train ?"

TO A YOUNG STUDENT.

VERY warm, and very true,
Are my wishes, dear, for you ;
Very true and very warm,
They a wreath of rhymes shall form.

May thy healthful bloom and grace
Still be seen in form and face ;
May the braids of thy brown hair
Still be golden-hued and fair.

May thy loveliness aye last,
Being that rare beauty, cast
From the heart, and from the mind,
High and noble, generous, kind.

May thy intellect, whose ken
Searches out the minds of men,
Scrutinizing ancient works
In which hidden knowledge lurks ;

May it still be sound and clear,
Used with reverence and fear ;
Used for God, who owns thy soul,
Who alone can keep it whole.

So thou shalt not lose, but gain
From the workings of thy brain,
Brighter jewels of rich thought
Than thou ever yet hast sought.

So philosophy shall seem
Not a mystery or dream,
But it shall illumined be
By the light of Deity.

So thy studies need not cease
Of the old-time bards of Greece,
Homer and Euripides,
Æschylus and Sophocles.

But a new charm shall be given,
When thou hast a hold on heaven,
To all thinkers, old and new,
And all science, false or true.

For the false shall not allure
Into theories obscure ;
And the true shall lead thee far
Up beyond the morning star.

Thus I pray that God may shower
Gifts, to make thy spirit's dower
Of a priceless value, bright
With the lustre of heaven's light.

CHILDREN AND FLOWERS.

NOW is the time of blossoming,
The children's happiest time ;
We hear their merry voices ring,
As up the banks they climb,
In search of wood-anemones,
That grow beneath the budding trees.

We see them with their aprons full
Of treasures they have found ;
Of roots, that they have dared to pull
From the free forest ground ;
Wild flowers, that love to hide themselves,
Are dug up by these little elves.

They mean to plant them, by and by,
In gardens of their own ;
And when June comes, and warm July,
These wood-waifs, fully grown,
Will live to bless the summer air
With all their garden sisters fair.

O children, laugh and shout and sing,
And make your gardens gay ;
Sweet are the blossoms of the Spring,
But sweeter ye than they ;

And sometimes—would it were not so—
Ye are as short-lived, quick to go.

Ah, yes ! sometimes the loving Hand
That made them fair and bright,
Transplants them to the heavenly land,
To blossom in His sight,
Where flowers that never fade away
Make fragrant the eternal day.

TO A YOUNG GIRL.

WHY, dearest love, such a garden wear
Upon thy shoulder and bosom fair?

The violets are jealous because thine eye
Is of a deeper and softer dye.

The roses into a faintness sink,
Because thy cheeks are a sweeter pink.

And the lilies are drooping, even now,
Because thy open and spotless brow,

And that marvel of sculpture, thy rounded chin,
With its dainty dimple carved therein,

Being more white and smooth than they,
Make the white lilies look but grey!

Sorry am I that flowers should be
Dying of envy and jealousy.

But wear not so many upon thy breast.
For unadorned beauty, you know, is best.

L I N E S

(WRITTEN BY REQUEST FOR SOME PUPILS LEAVING SCHOOL AT
THE PRIORY.)

STILL am I dull and uninspired,
My gentle girls ; and now I come
Simply to ask your honest pity,
Because the sprite that erst was fired
To sing within me, now is dumb,
And cannot pipe the poorest ditty.

Alas ! not dumb, I fear, but dead,
The breathless hush is so entire ;
My silent bosom aches with bearing
A spirit from whom life is fled ;
I cannot steal ethereal fire
Prometheus-like, with wingèd daring.

If I could gain electric heat,
I might discover if, perchance,
(And oh, what gladness to discover !)
This state of stupor so complete,
Were but a death-like, dreary trance,
That may at any time pass over.

But I am no philosopher,
I leave experiments to those
Who, like Barat, are skilled in science ;

Nor do I dare for shame aver
That I'm a poet ; but plain prose
May plight to thee my warm affiance.

Soon will ye leave the Priory walls,
Where ye have spent such busy days
Of discipline, and studious pleasure ;
Heard the old bell ring through the walls
For morning work, or evening praise,
Or night's repose, a well-earned treasure.

How sweet will seem, in after-years,
The pictures Memory will keep,
Of graceful forms and kindly faces,
Of friendships made 'mid smiles and tears ;
Some soon to pass—others too deep
To fade with things that Time erases.

How vividly will sometimes rise
This terrace, and the garden fair,
These grand old trees, and dreamy waters,
Smiling beneath the summer skies ;
And all that Nature's hand so rare,
Lavishes on her loving daughters.

And ye will think the fate was kind
That placed ye in this lovely spot,
To study hard, not lessons only,
But the strange human heart and mind ;
The wisdom that can make life's lot
Stormy or calm, love-brimmed or lonely.

My hope for every one of you,
Dear gentle girls, on whom I look
With tender and unfeigned emotion,
Are that ye will be ever true
To the great God, who cannot brook
Divided hearts, or mixed devotion.

Be true to Him with humble love ;
And with each other, foes or friends,
Be ever patient, kind, forbearing ;
So we shall meet in homes above,
Where bliss begins and never ends,
Heaven's rest, and heaven's full glory sharing.

**THE EVENING HYMN IN A GIRLS'
SCHOOL.**

I CAUGHT to-night your evening hymn,
As slowly wandering by,
To watch the red gold growing dim
In the clear sunset sky.

I stood and gazed upon the west,
While the sweet hymn went on,
That seemed to lull with peace and rest
The busy day just gone.

I could not tell the words you sang,
And so I made them suit
The feelings through my soul that rang,
Although my lips were mute.

“O Thou, that hearest from Thy throne
This hymn of solemn praise,
Make all those singing hearts Thy own
Now, in their early days.

“Keep all those innocent fair lives,
From every earthly ill ;

68 *EVENING HYMN IN A GIRLS' SCHOOL.*

From the soul's subtle foe, who strives
All evil to fulfil.

"Let them walk through this world so well,
That when life's day is done,
They may with Thee, dear Saviour, dwell
Beyond the setting sun."

MOTHER'S LOVE.

(WRITTEN FOR A GROUP OF CHILDREN.)

A GROUP of children talking of their mothers !
One whispers—Mine has silvery hair,
But yet I think, and so think all my brothers,
She is most beautiful and fair.

And one says—Mine has gold-brown curls, like
amber,
And eyes as blue as violets ;
We love around her cushioned chair to clamber—
She never wearies of her pets.

Another—Mine has eyes brown, soft, and shining,
Straight nose, so delicate and thin,
Pale cheeks, but lips whose smooth and crimson
lining
Show teeth like purest pearls within.

And yet another says—I cannot tell you
Of perfect teeth, or hair, or eyes ;
But *my* mother's words and smiles impel you
To know her kind, and true, and wise.

And thus they playfully chat on, comparing
The beauties of each mother mild;

While I, in silent thoughtfulness am sharing
The preference of each partial child.

But little think they, dear and heedless children,
What mother's love can do and bear.
I dwell on that, until the theme bewildering
Fills me with anxious, tender care.

Oh, should these young things, grown to men and
women,
Grieve the warm heart that throbs for them ;
Scorn her wise counsel, and perversely swim in
The tides of danger, they should stem.

Should it be so, too late will they remember
The mother's love that cured their pain,
That soothed their woe, and fanned life's dying
ember,
When but a spark, to life again.

The mother's love that shunned not the infection,
When others from the sickness fled ;
But rather, with a tenderer protection,
Hovered around the restless bed :

And kept lone vigils through the long night dreary,
Within the sad and silent room,
Made the cool drinks, and shook the pillows weary,
And wiled away the sufferer's gloom.

The mother's love that watched when sons went
wandering
Till midnight passed, and morning came ;

And spent the hours in hoping, praying, pondering,
And keeping bright love's quenchless flame.

The mother's love that robbed herself of pleasure,
And toiled to get some jewelled toy,
To fill up the young daughter's flowing measure
Of social gaiety and joy.

The mother's love that bore the contradiction,
The cold neglect, the proud self-will,
With mild rebuke ; or hid the sharp infliction
With sweet forbearance, calm and still.

O what must be the bitter anguish given
To those, who pay with keen distress
The patient mother, who for years had striven
Her darling ones to guard and bless !

The day will come, the saddest day of trial,
When death will hush that mother's heart,
And all her gentle, generous self-denial,
Will seem to have been an angel's part.

The eyes are shut, folded the busy fingers,
White, placid, motionless, and cold ;
And on the brow—not careworn now—there lingers
That beauty Death alone can mould.

O may these young things feel no sore repentance,
When God, beholding from above,
Shall utter His irrevocable sentence,
And snatch from earth their mother's love.

THE SWIFT TRANSITION.*

"There is no death; what seems so is transition."

—LONGFELLOW.

WAS there a secret, still, small voice of warning,
A whisper in the sweet spring air,
When he rose up at early prime that morning,
Refreshed and strong for work and prayer?

Had he revealed to him some sudden vision,
With unimagined glories rife,
That gave a forecast of the swift transition
From mortal to immortal life?

We cannot ask him—cannot lift the curtain
That parts the living from the dead;
But of one simple truth we are most certain,
His work on earth was perfected.

His sermon for the coming day was ended;
Letters were written, true to time;
Then, by his life-long genius attended,
A poet-thought was set to rhyme.

* These lines were written after hearing of the sudden death of the
Rev. William Jay Bolton, of Bath, England, who died May 28, 1884.

And when the study's work in calm seclusion,
The household rites of praise and prayer,
The cheerful morning meal without confusion,
Or one stray hint of coming care,

When these were over, in his garden's pleasance,
He walked awhile with gladdened eye ;
His children with him, and Spring's joyous presence
Doubling the beauty of the earth and sky.

The cuckoo called afar, and merry thrushes
Sang in the shrubberies and trees ;
And from the lilac and the hawthorn bushes
Sweet fragrance blessed the passing breeze.

All things within the walls of that fair garden
Breathed but of life in one full breath ;
And birds, and bees, and flowers would have craved
pardon,
Could they have murmured the word—death.

The ramble ended, every sense delighting,
The loving group went in again ;
The father sought his study and his writing,
But what was this—that stopped his pen ?

The vigorous hands that were but just now busy,
Were losing the quick pulse of life ;
With fluttering heart he faintly called : " I'm dizzy,
Help me upon my couch, dear wife."

Ere skill could come—but there was no skill needed—
God's messenger had flown so fast,
The ready soul so soon the summons heeded,
The moment for man's aid had passed !

O, painless death ! O, easy, swift transition !
One hour among his garden flowers,
The next, in God's own paradise elysian,
Where angels tend the fragrant bowers.

One hour, in family re-union, singing
The morning hymn of grateful love,
The next, where all the happy air is ringing
With music only heard above.

At day-dawn working for his Lord and Master,
With service ever at his best ;
And before noon—could a reward come faster—
Clasped in his dear Lord's arms to rest.

FROM ALPINE HEIGHTS TO HEAVENLY.*

BEYOND the giant hills that held aloft
The ancient city of Lausanne,
There shone, what seemed to be, in outline soft,
Angelic homes not built by man.

Flashes of dazzling light showed, now and then,
The snowy robes and harps of gold ;
Distinct awhile, then indistinct again,
As veiling clouds beneath them rolled.

They were the glaciers on the dizzy heights
Of mountain ranges far away,
Piercing the sky, and gleaming with rare lights,
Such as o'er angel forms might play.

Five thousand feet above the level sea,
Stood Sepey, 'mid these heights sublime ;
With flower-sown cots and chalets, made to be
Refreshing haunts for summer-time.

"Come, let us seek the hamlet, green and fair,
That clings to yonder mountain's breast ;

* Miss Bolton, of Pelham Priory, died August 6, 1884, at Sepey, Switzerland.

76 *FROM ALPINE HEIGHTS TO HEAVENLY.*

For oh, I long for higher, purer air !"
Cried one with sultry heat oppressed.

Eager to grant the wish of one so dear,
Their dearest one, their joy and pride ;
They made the ascent with mingled faith and fear,
Passing dark gorges, deep and wide ;

And reached the little longed-for mountain inn,
Beneath those shining peaks of snow ;
And there she seemed awhile new life to win,
And with new rapturous thought to glow.

It seemed as if the visions of St. John
Were opened to her earnest eyes ;
As if the city of God came down upon
Those heights that mingled with the skies.

There was the wondrous light, as crystal clear,
To dwellers on the plains unknown,
Such light as bathed the holy, exiled Seer,
When writing of the Eternal throne ;

There were heaven's gates of every rainbow hue,
Varying with the night and day ;
At sunrise, ruby ; at noon, sapphire blue ;
In the weird moonlight, pearly gray.

Such glories seemed to their beloved one
A gracious foretaste, sweet and sure,
Of promised joys that soon should be begun,
Beyond those gates so high and pure.

FROM ALPINE HEIGHTS TO HEAVENLY. 77

And oft she said, "Oh, would it not be grand
To go to heaven from here!" And this,
That scarcely seemed a prayer, at God's command
Brought down a summons into bliss.

She fell asleep one morning at sunrise,
They watched in vain for one last word,
For still asleep, she passed beyond the skies,
And woke in presence of her Lord.

IN MEMORIAM.

(HARRIET SCHUYLER.)

IT was not that her eyes were bright
With intellect's transfusing light,
Or that her brow was clear and high
With thought's habitual purity,
But something shone from her dear face
That told of spiritual grace.

We felt that no philosopher
Could fail, in his discourse with her,
Of finding on her mental throne
A power as royal as his own ;
But there was yet a better sense
Than Reason or Intelligence.

We knew no poet ever sung,
But what the accents of his tongue
Echoed within her heart, and brought
The music of his noblest thought
Her kindred soul with joy to thrill ;
But there was something sweeter still.

And it was this : abounding love
That came from its pure source above ;

An all-pervading sympathy,
Both quick to feel, and quick to see
The good and great in books and men,
And give back all she gained again.

And it was this : she walked with God ;
And, as our common paths we trod,
We felt that with a loving awe,—
Awe, but not fear,—His face she saw ;
Watching the guidance of His eye,
That promised guidance ever nigh.

And this it also was : she fed
Upon the truths she daily read
In the one Book of books, until
Her mind grew deeper, brighter still ;
Her large heart warmer and more pure ;
Her faith more joyful and more sure.

So, looking unto Jesus, she
Drank of His heavenly sympathy.
No hearer only, but a doer
Of all He taught her ; sick and poor,
And desolate, and young and old,
Were cheered by better gifts than gold.

Ah, who that knew her long and well,
But can recall how tears would swell
Into those kind eyes, at the pain
That other hearts must still sustain ;

Or, how the beaming smile so bright
Told of her joy in their delight.

And now that diadem of love
Has crowned her in her home above ;
The sunshine of her joy is there
Uncoloured by a passing care ;
The " good land not far off " is hers,
Where not a sigh the air bestirs.

Now, too, she sees what here below
By faith oft set her heart aglow,—
The King of kings, in all His grace
And wondrous beauty, face to face :
Ah, when this little life is spanned,
May we rejoin her in that land !

A RARE CHARACTER.

(IN MEMORY OF MRS. ELIZABETH EMMET LE ROY, WHO DIED
DECEMBER 31, 1879.)

NEWS to-day we cannot borrow
Of the month that comes to-morrow,
May be with a sudden sorrow.

For how little did we think,
When we saw December sink
Underneath Time's river-brink

What it was he bore away ;
Who it was that dying lay
On the eve of New-Year's day.

But when rose the New-Year's sun,
Came the news we fain would shun,
That a long-loved life was done.

Long-loved life that lasted long ;
Yet a rush of feeling strong,
Made the news seem like a wrong

To the hearts that loved her so ;
Love is evermore so slow
To allow the loved to go.

And in her, youth seemed to strive
Keeping heart, mind, soul, alive
With fresh force, though eighty-five.

Nought of age was seen in her,
But that grace of character
Which ripe wisdom does confer.

Wisdom quiet and serene,
With an insight clear and keen,
Gathering from life's chequered scene

Knowledge, counsel, truth, to suit
Young and old, like mellow fruit :
Charity, that shuns dispute ;

Resignation, in the thick
Of life's woes, that touch the quick
Of the troubled and heart-sick ;

Active energy, to ply
Tasks, however hard, that lie
Close beneath the hand and eye ;

Perseverance, to get through
All she had designed to do,
To her plan and purpose true.

Modesty, most rare, the sign
Of humility divine,
And of sympathy benign.

Sympathy, that gave unsought
Kind attention, patient thought,
To the works another wrought.

But beside the moral grace
That made all to her give place,
As she did herself abase—

Genius was hers : the power
With an artist-hand, to shower
Beauty on the passing hour.

Portraits, landscapes, flowers, all told
Of that genius, fearless, bold,
Which no sum of years makes old.

Such the varied blessedness
Of a life, whose fair impress
We shall never value less.

Of a life we hoped might fill
Yet another decade still,
Like sweet Mary Somerville ;

Like that woman half-divine
Herschell's sister Caroline :
"Why not *such* old age be *thine*,"

We so fondly asked ! But no,
From a longer life below
God had called her, she must go.

And 'twas sweet, without a sigh,
As the dying year passed by,
Sleeping peacefully, to die.

SONNETS.

JUPITER.

"Is it a god, or is it a star,
That, entranced, I gaze on nightly?"

—LONGFELLOW.

MUSING one summer evening by the sea,
That song of thine came ringing in my ear,
Thou king of poets, unto all men dear!
I saw on ocean's verge what seemed to be
A lamp on some far ship, but presently
A star—no lamp—uprose, a golden sphere,
The king of planets, full, majestic, clear,
Like an ambassador of Deity.
Entranced I gazed, and when ascending higher
O'er the dark waves he shed a path of light,
All other orbs, e'en Mars with eye of fire,
And steady Saturn, and Orion's choir
Of three-fold harmony, seemed hardly bright,
While he, in splendor, held the throne of night.

LONGFELLOW'S DEATH.

"Ah, why shouldst thou be dead?"

—LONGFELLOW.

"**A**H, why shouldst thou be dead?" This was thy
cry,

Made with exceeding mournfulness, when he,
Thy friend, and Nature's lover, Agassiz,
In the full flush of life was called to die!
And why shouldst thou be dead, great poet,—why?
We echo the sad question back to thee.

For though what men call age might reckoned be
As to thy years, yet was thy winter sky
As soft with spring-like beauty as in youth;
Yet was the fountain of thy genius bright
With living waters; for that fount was fed
From the clear crystal springs of love and truth,
Of wisdom's mingled sadness and delight:
Then, sweetest poet, why shouldst thou be dead?

Sad questioners, *this* is the reason why:

"God sent His singers on the earth" to be
Dispensers of His dearest charity;
Of thought ennobling, feeling pure and high;

Of lessons taught by stars, and sunlit sky,
By flowers and trees and rocks, and stormy sea ;
By household love, and patriot chivalry ;
By sorrow, death, and all that cannot die.
And when His almoners of gifts divine
Have faithfully performed their task so blest,
He calls them to rewards far, far above
Earth's highest fame ; to honors that combine
New powers of service, with harmonious rest ;
Rapture serene, with never-changing love.

TERESITA.

(ON A PICTURE PAINTED BY EDWARD MAY, OF PARIS.)

I.

O SWEETEST, saddest face that ever yet
The painter's magic pencil hath portrayed !
Untired I gaze on thee, dark Tuscan maid,
Guessing the love and sorrow that have met
Upon those patient lips so firmly set ;
On that calm brow, gleaming beneath the shade
Of those smooth waves of hair so simply laid ;
And in those eyes that are not often wet
With useless tears ; for it is plain to see
In the pure pallor of thine oval cheek,
And in the bearing of thy queenly head,
That courage, truth, and conscious dignity,
Can bear the stab of grief, nor moan, nor speak
About the life-blood that thy heart hath shed.

II.

Untired I gaze, for many thoughts arise ;
Thoughts of the artist, far across the sea,
Who gave that picture-poem unto me,
Of his rare skill a token and a prize.

With loving speed imagination flies,
And I again am where I used to be.
I ring the studio-bell, quick turns the key;
And there he stands, his deep-set, earnest eyes
Watching the finished work of yesterday,
A shade of sadness on his noble brow.
With whispered praise, I watch, too, by his side.
But when did genius not itself gainsay?
Last night, he sighs, 'twas well done, but not now:
I'll touch and retouch, until satisfied.

TO SLEEP.

"Love not sleep."—PROVERBS xx. 13.

O DARK-EYED sleep—so kind thou art, so still,
That the wise king's stern mandate not to love
thee

I find to be a counsel far above me,
Though I would fain his mandates all fulfil,
And so guard daily life from daily ill ;
But Solomon himself would scarce reprove me,
Or from thy sheltering bosom wish to move me,
If I could show him how, at thy sweet will,
The chilling heartache, and the haunting care,
Which sometimes press me with a weight like lead,
All melt away to nothingness, whene'er
Thy gentle touch is felt upon my head ;
Thy voice brings back lost friends, and faces fair,
And whispers tenderly, *they are not dead !*

RE-UNION.

I THINK, sometimes, when sitting all alone,
What would it be to see the faces blest
Of those who long since entered into rest,
Whose brows with light celestial long have shone ;
What would it be to hear again the tone
Of voices that erst thrilled me through with love,
Whose music long since joined the choir above,
And left me silent in a wordless moan ;
What would it be to hear the light steps steal
Over the threshold of my solitude ;—
Oh, vain, fond fancies of a yearning heart !
Be patient ; and in heaven thou yet shalt feel,
That chief among the joys of life renewed,
Are the re-unions that can never part.

JANUARY.

O JANUARY, of what strange surprises
Have thy swift weeks been curiously formed ;
Thou, with sweet glowing love, my heart hast
warmed,
For all thou hast put on such false disguises !
One day, with April freshness, signalizes
Its changeful hours of pleasant rain and shine,
Rain like a tender dew, so soft and fine,
With which a chastened spirit sympathizes ;
Then, a June warmth astounds us for a while ;
We throw the windows wide, remaining chary
Of fires and furs, and gratefully we smile
Up in thy face that looks so mild and merry,—
When, suddenly, thou wilt no more beguile,
But art thyself again, stern January !

BEJEWELLED TREES.

HAVE ye become, in your old age, dear trees,
So fond of ornament, that jewels bright
Ye must put on, to flash through misty light
Of soft, delicious, dreamy days like these?
O priestly oak, does it your reverence please
To grace your solemn storm-withstanding head
With crowns of garnet and of rubies red?
And must ye, merry maples, woo the breeze
With amber beads and rosy coral toys?
Thou, too, O pensive elm, thy burnished gold
And wealth of topaz gems, must thou display?
Well! revel while ye can in such vain joys;
For soon will Winter, heartless, stern, and cold,
Snatch all your Autumn jewelry away!

RESPONSIBILITY.

WHATEVER be the gift God gave to thee,
When in thy new-born flesh He breathed the
soul,
Soon recognized by those who bore control
Over the opening years of infancy ;
Whether it be the gift of poesy,
Words aptly chosen for the thoughts that roll
In measured numbers to a wished-for goal ;
Or a like gift of subtle harmony,
Music, that reaches with a resonant power
The very inmost shrine of echoing hearts ;
Or the clear eye and skilful hand, the dower
That makes thee noble and renowned in arts ;
Double that gift by daily use ; the hour
Of reckoning comes for all thy God-given parts.

JUNE.

JUNE, didst thou meet in coming down the skies,
Thy sister May, among the stars so bright ?

For she departed from us late last night,
Told us not whither bent, but we surmise,
From the rapt look in her uplifted eyes,

Some voice, unheard by us, a call had given
To join the everlasting spring in heaven,
And tend the fadeless flowers of Paradise.

Dear is thy beauty, ever welcome June !
Queen of midsummer, with thy golden hair
Crowned with moss-rosebuds, Love's own royal
boon ;

Yet mourn we must that May, so fresh and fair,
With her rich music filling earth and air,
Has but one month to keep our hearts in tune.

CONCISE ANSWERS.

AS terse Demosthenes, the ancient Greek,
When asked the first, the second, and the third
Great charm of eloquence, spake but a word,
That "Action" was the one great charm to seek :
So, with decision did St. Austin speak,
When the deep question was to him referred,
What grace of Christian life most surely stirred,
Creating power to smile on creatures weak,
Answering, "Humility, Humility";
A third time asked, unchanging still replied,
"Humility!" Yes, that alone can be
The grace that makes the will of God our guide :
God dwells within the humble heart, but He
O'erthrows the feet of them that walk in pride.

DREAMING.

"Act maketh joy or woe."—LIGHT OF ASIA.

OH, be not idle, dreaming every hour
Of what ye mean to do some future day;
Letting the present glide in dreams away,
When 'tis the present only has the power
To change your dreams of doing to a dower
Of fruitful deeds. Oh, dare not thus delay!
Give generously now while yet ye may;
Speak now, write now, good words that, like a
shower
Of gracious rain from heaven, may start new life
In some sad heart. Strike while the iron is hot,
And shape some tool that may thy purpose show
Of working love for hatred, peace for strife,
Wisdom for folly. Shun the dreamer's lot,
It is a stagnant pool that cannot flow.

EARLY MORN.

WHEN sleep's soft thrall, with dawn of day, is
breaking,

With joy I see—just lifting up my head—
Through the broad, bounteous windows near my
bed,

The first delicious glow of life awaking.

I watch the bright, unruffled ocean, making

The fair young morning blush with timid red

To see her beauty mirrored there, and spread

Far o'er the waves. I watch the tall ships taking,

On flag and canvas, all the colors rare

Of her sweet beauty and her rich attire ;

The violet veil that binds her golden hair,

The chain of crimson rubies flashing fire ;

Until the blue, calm sky, with tender air,

Charms the beloved morn to come up higher.

A SUNDAY IN SUMMER.

I.

SO deep the stillness of this summer day—
That e'en the insects rustling in the grass,
The humming-bees that o'er the flower-beds pass,
The whirring of the swallow from the spray
Where it had lit a moment, on its way
From these dark trees to its own eave-hung nest,
Seem almost startling! O what perfect rest!
How does the very silence seem to say—
This is the hour for holy heavenward thought;
Lift up thy heart, and shake from it each care
That from the busy world it may have caught;
Commune with Him who unseen fills the air
With mingled peace and joy; and suffer naught
To chill the sunshine of thy Sabbath prayer.

II.

Just as the Singer sweet of Israel
Exclaimed—"O God, my heart is fixed—to Thee
Will I give praise with harp and psaltery"—
So would I sing to Him with whom I dwell,
(101)

The shadow of whose wings protect me well ;
And every hour of the dear day of rest,
Incense of love shall rise up from my breast
In glad thanksgiving hymns, inaudible
To human ears, perhaps, but not to His,
The Tuner of the Universe, who hears
Alike heaven's grand resounding harmonies
And the soft, half-breathed semitone, that clears
The way for fuller notes, more deep and strong,
That waft the soul to heaven in Sabbath song.

THE STORMY SUNDAY.

"No church to-day."

"NO church to-day": so thick and deep the snow
Which the keen wind heaps up in shapeless
drifts,

And through the air the icy powder sifts,
Stinging the face of travellers who go
Along the beaten road, with heads bent low ;
But here, in secret, the free spirit lifts
Its worship heavenward ; praising God for gifts
Of home and hearth, which from His goodness flow.
Here, in warm shelter, happy hymns ascend,
Reaching His ear 'mid harps of angel choirs ;
Here, with delight and reverence, we attend
The Holy Book whose lessons Truth inspires ;
And pour out prayer to the All-seeing Friend,
Who knows far-off our thoughts and our desires.

JANUARY 20, 1882.

THE SEASONS.

(105)

THE DYING YEAR'S COUNSELS.

NOW the year is dying fast,
Many hours he cannot last,
Deathly chills are o'er him cast.

All his children stand around,
Uttering not a word or sound,
As with spells of magic bound.

Twelve there are ; I dimly mark
All their figures in the dark,
Hovering near the patriarch.

Like the sons of Jacob old,
Waiting each one to be told
What the future shall unfold.

Though the father's life is done,
All his children, one by one,
Have fresh races to be run.

Leaning down, I bend my ear
O'er the faint, expiring year,
And these words I seem to hear :

January, let the weight
Of thy charities be great,
For the poor and desolate.

Let thy brother, close behind,
Sheathe his sword of cutting wind,
When he doth the homeless find.

March, when days are getting long,
Let thy growing hours be strong
To set right some wintry wrong.

April, with thy ploughed-up earth,
Bid each scented shower give birth
To some seed of deathless worth.

Merry, music-loving May,
Let thy life be not too gay
For unselfish work each day.

June, thy beauty is a snare,
To waste time in visions fair ;
Of vain dreaming, oh, beware !

July, as thy thunders roll,
Pierce each doubting mortal's soul
With the truth of God's control.

August, in thy sultry heat,
Teach some lesson, pure and sweet,
To the reapers at thy feet.

Thou, September, scatter wide,
With thy sheaves well satisfied,
Seed-corn for heaven's harvest-tide.

Sweet October, fill with praise,
Rich and glowing as thy days,
Every poet's heart-felt lays.

And November sad,—a psalm
Tender, trustful, full of balm,
Thou must breathe in spirits calm.

Thou, the youngest of them all,
Whom we "dark December" call,
Brightest light on thee shall fall.

Christmas logs blaze on the fires ;
Christmas carols sing the choirs ;
Christ's own love each heart inspires.

This is all I heard, for now,
Pressing the year's death-cold brow,
I rose up with many a vow.

WINTER'S EXHIBITION OF BLACK AND WHITE.

IN that world-famous and time-honored town,
London,—the mother of Old England's pride,—
Are countless picture galleries of renown,
Where noble works are seen on every side ;
And 'mid the rare collections of delight,
Is one they term " The Hall of black and white."

There is displayed the artists' fair design
Dashed boldly off in charcoal or in chalk ;
Or etched in ink, or drawn with pencil fine,
Are speaking likenesses that almost talk :
Nor grace, nor power, does any picture lack,
Though all confined to simple white and black.

Such exhibition, only better far,
For many happy weeks have I possessed !
And now, the bright half-moon and evening star
Add a new lustre to my pictures blest ;
And I could sit and gaze the livelong night
On Winter's fair designs in black and white.

The spotless snow has covered all the ground,
And glitters in the moonlight, as if sand

Made out of diamond-dust was scattered round ;
As if the Galaxy, that nightly spanned
The arch of heaven, had ventured down in mirth
And strown its myriad stars upon the earth.

With what perfection Winter draws the trees
That stand upon the radiant, moonlit snow !
What other artist with like graceful ease
Could the rare work of faultless shadows show,
So bold and black, and yet so clear and fine,
Howe'er intricately the branches twine ?

And yet another picture, when the day
Rises upon the snow iced o'er by night,
When frost has cased the woods in silver gray,
And bole and bough and twig are flashing bright
With crystal gems, that catch prismatic hues—
Amethyst, ruby, sapphire,—as they choose.

But that which Winter likes himself the best,
Is when the falling snow fills all the air ;
And the slim cedars, in their white robes drest,
Stand like young choristers, so pure and fair,
Ready, at morn or eve, the chant to raise,
What time the wind his mighty organ plays.

Some say the artist Winter lacks due fire,
That his manipulation is severe ;
Yet, neither Spring, Fall, Summer, who require
For their rich works a warmer atmosphere,
Have freer grace of outline, higher light,
Than Winter's rare designs in black and white.

THE INFANT YEAR.

"Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will pay
thee thy wages."

A STILL small voice in the dark midnight
Speaks in my wakeful ear,
Bidding me watch for the dawning light
That ushers the new-born year.

Long ere the rays of morning glow,
I behold it silently lie,
Soft and pure in its cradle of snow,
The nursling of the sky.

Come from the land where there is no time,
No vanishing months or years,
To live and die in this mortal clime,
Amid human hopes and fears.

The voice I hear in the midnight deep,
Is surely the voice of God ;
It startles my heart from dreams of sleep,
Thrilling its deepest chord.

"A new-born year is given to thee,
As if it were *only* thine ;
Take it away, and nurse it for me,"
Whispers this voice divine.

Well may I tremble with love and fear,
As the sacred trust is given
To train the unknown and unformed year
For eternity and Heaven.

Forever the issues of the trust
To treasure aright each day ;
Forever the "wages," full and just,
The Ancient of Days will pay.

It is God that speaks : then hope and faith
Shall nerve my heart's endeavor
To do His will ; for *whatever God saith*
I know it shall be forever !

THE SNOW.

THE afternoon was dark and drear,
The sky was hanging low,
And in the sullen atmosphere
Was felt the coming snow.

I shuddered with instinctive dread,
A chill of heart within,—
As if dead friends were doubly dead,
When winter snows begin.

All night the wind would start, and call,
As if in sudden pain ;
And syllabled dear names to all
Who heard the broken strain.

“My child, my boy,” one murmured low,
“Why art thou snatched from me ?”
One wept—“My mother, how can woe
Be borne apart from thee ?”

I sat my lonely fire beside,
As fell the midnight snow,
And mourned afresh for those who died
And left me long ago.

Memory would hardly let me pray,
But a long vigil kept ;
Then, thoughts of voices hushed for aye
Possessed me while I slept.

But when the night's work had been done
And I rose up from rest,
And saw the mantle laid upon
The earth's still sleeping breast :

And saw the trees, in silver clad,
Flashing against the sky,
Like angel sentinels who had
Some mission from on high :

And saw the wondrous beauty given
To every bush and stone,
The dazzling purity of heaven
Over all objects thrown ;

I thought my shrinking dread of snow
Was like the dread of death ;
Beforehand—spirits weak and low,
A weight upon the breath ;

But *afterwards*, the short night o'er,
A burst of light supreme,
A glory never seen before
In any earthly dream :

The glory of the heavenly halls
Where reigns th' Eternal One,

Whose radiance lights the crystal walls
And dazzles like the sun.

And in His loving smile they live
Whom we are weeping sore ;
He gives them, what we could not give,
Gladness for evermore.

And we, perchance, their bliss to share,
May soon be called to go,
And shine, like them, in garments fair,
And whiter than the snow.

A MARCH STORM.

THERE is a howling and a roar
Like maniacs in chains ;
A rattling at the outer door,
And at the window-panes.

Then, moaning down the chimney, comes
A dreary, smothered sound ;
And then a noise of fifes and drums
Goes whirling all around.

The wizard winds, with giant force,
From every quarter blow ;
And utter in their changeful course,
A strain of wrath and woe.

Fiercer and fiercer grows the strife
Of south wind, and of north ;
The east hurls far its cutting knife,
The west comes shouting forth.

And through the mingled snow and rain,
Across the field, one sees
The tall, gaunt figures bend in pain,
Of old gray-headed trees.

And as we watch from firesides warm
The elements at war,
Hearing the voices of the storm
Rise to a louder roar ;

We think of those who have no fire,
No shelter warm and dry ;
Exposed to want and hunger dire,
Beneath a frowning sky :

Of foot-sore travelers gone astray,
Bewildered as they roam ;
Losing the landmarks on their way,
That used to guide them home :

Of shipwrecked sailors on the main
Clinging to plank or rope,
And searching through the clouds, in vain,
For one bright ray of hope.

From woe to woe our fancy flies,
And then returns to rest
Where hourly thanksgivings arise,
For comforts long possessed.

And prayer ascends with gratitude,
That want may find relief,
That Charity, with Love imbued,
May lessen world-wide Grief.

WINDS AND SHOWERS, THEN FRAGRANT FLOWERS.

"March winds and April showers, bring forth May flowers."

— *Old Proverb.*

O THE merry winds of March,
Underneath the azure arch
Of the ever-softening sky,
How they fill th' aerial space,
With the treble and the bass
Of the frolic songs they try !

How they toss about and twirl
All the ragged leaves, that curl
Just where Autumn bade them lie ;
Never buried, after all,
Although Winter's snowy pall
Hid them long from every eye.

How they whistle, and then wail,
Blowing over hill and vale,
Making all the forests bend ;
Not in mischief, nor in mirth,
But to purify the earth,
Do they thus their breath expend.

When the winds have done His will
Which they evermore fulfil,
Then, the gentle April rains,

With a music all their own,
Mostly in a monotone,
 Search the gardens and the plains.

And the sun-attempered powers
Of the rainbow-tinted showers,
 Open every budding spray ;
Apple-boughs in pink bedight,
Cherry blooms in bridal white,
 Usher in the flowers of May.

Then the bells, so pure and pale,
Of the lilies of the vale,
 Shed their modest fragrance round ;
While anemones, dear pets,
And green-hooded violets
 Crowd the mossy forest-ground.

And upon the hawthorn bush
Cluster starry flowers, that flush
 Red and white, like maidens fair ;
And the lithe laburnum trees
Catch the humming-birds and bees,
 With their curls of yellow hair.

So the proverb, old and true,
Which the winds of March renew,
 And the April rains repeat,
We must weave into a lay
Which beseems the merry May,
 When she brings us all things sweet.

SPRING'S TELEGRAM.

(AN IMPROMPTU ODE.)

CAN it, oh, can it be
That March, so blustering and burly,
With howling winds so strong and surly,
Has met upon the southern sea
The bark of sweetest Spring,
And with one savage fling
Has wrecked her irrecoverably?

Can it, oh, can it be
Those rude wild winds have hurled
Down deep in the watery world
That beautiful and fairy craft,
First scattering, fore and aft,
The precious, priceless freight
For which we long and wait?
The odors—subtle and fine,—
Odors which intertwine,
With curious influence,
Our every nerve and sense,
Are they scattered o'er the wave,
Where the furious March winds rave?
The music that bark was bringing,
With birds that were northward winging,

The music so full and free,
Tuned to each various key
Of sharp or flat, of major or minor—
The sweet themes, simpler and finer,
With more of melody laden
Than the strains of Mozart or Haydn,—
Is this music lost forevermore
In the tempest's wild uproar?

Oh no!—oh no, no, no!
Away with such querulous woe,—
Away with the sad complaint
Of a spirit tired and faint;
For even now, while I chime
This foolish, fanciful rhyme,
There is something in the air,—
Telegrams are throbbing there,—
'Tis surely a message sent;
I feel the electric chain
Vibrating over my brain,
Filling my heart with content,—
'Tis a message,—sweet and short!
*The bark of Spring is safe in port,
No damage to her freight is done,
And she will be here with the rising sun.*

THE VERNAL EQUINOX.

IT was to me in merry days
When I was but a child,
A great delight to hear the phrase,
As stormy March grew mild,
“The vernal equinox has come
And brought the spring from out her home !”

To me the “*vernal equinox*”
Had a most thrilling sound !
It seemed a sacred treasure-box
Where all sweet things were found ;
I knew God only kept the key,
But He would open presently.

And then what myriads of joys
Would bless this earth of ours !
What butterflies for girls and boys
Flitting among the flowers ;
What primrose banks, what violet beds,
What daffodils with drooping heads !

How quickly would the lilacs bloom
Down by the garden gate,
Shedding afar their fresh perfume,
That seems to concentrate

The essence of young April hours,
Breathing their joy in budding bowers.

The vernal equinox to me
Seemed full of music, too !
'Twas like an open aviary ;
First flew out the cuckoo,
That happy egoist in air
Calling his own name everywhere.

Then came the thrush, the linnet, lark,
The blackbird and the wren ;
What choruses, from dawn to dark,
O'erflowed each wood and glen ;
Until the nightingale with night
Filled the dusk vale with rich delight !

And then what long and flying runs,
Winged with ecstatic mirth,
When a succession of warm suns
Had dried the happy earth ;
For who could walk with sober tread
When spring was flying overhead ?

What bounding with the morning's light
To learn, with ready power,
The lessons which, if learned aright,
Would bring the leisure hour
For some sweet stroll to far-off hill,
Never too far for childhood's will.

Oh, vernal equinox of life,
How beautiful wert thou !
The very thought of thee is rife
With joys that even now
Make tears and smiles together start
From the full fountain in my heart.

SPRING'S SAD QUESTION AND GLAD
REPLY.

LIKE an angel of pity and sympathy,
With tears in her soft blue eyes,
The Spring, with her fitful melody,
Has come from the open skies.

From one to another the loving Spring
Goes waking up memory,
With, "What did the long cold Winter bring,
O what did it bring to thee?"

And one, with a shiver, makes reply,
"O the Winter with cruel breath,
It severed the closest, the dearest tie,
That ever was broken by death !

"For she was so good, so fair, so bright,
So innocent, pure, and true ;
My young, my beautiful wife, the light
Of my life is gone with you."

And another murmurs, "O gentle Spring,
Thou art touching a wound untold,
When thou askest, 'O what did the Winter bring
With its winds so sharp and cold ?'

"For it brought a fever hungry and wild,
That seized on my boy so brave :

SPRING'S SAD QUESTION AND REPLY. 121

Our eldest born, our twelve-year-old child,
And hurried him to the grave."

Then I heard the Spring, in a low sweet tone,
Answer these mourners sad,
"O heart-wounded mother—cease thy moan,
O sorrowful man, be glad.

"I have just come from my native land,
From the heaven of love and joy,
And there, 'mid a bright immortal band,
I beheld thy radiant boy.

"There, too, I saw in her robes of white,
More pure than the drifted snow,
The darling who was of thy life the light,
But a few short weeks ago."

Of all the seasons Spring is most fit
To lighten death's deepest gloom :
To show us that Easter angels sit
Watching the love-hallowed tomb ;

To teach that as seeds of lilies and wheat
Are put in the dark, damp mould,
Then spring up with flowers and fruitage sweet,
E'en now as forever of old ;

Just so will the dust of the dead arise
In the resurrection-morn,
And claim in new beauty, above the skies,
The spirits long since up-borne.

SPRING'S WILD FLOWERS.

FIRST to come forth are the anemones,
Scattered in scores beneath the budding trees :

Some are blue-gray, but very, very pale,
As if they were in fear of some rude gale :

Others are pink, listening with timid blush,
To the soft wooing of an earnest thrush.

For robins, merry chickadees, and thrushes,
Now sit and sing their loves on trees and bushes.

But birds come not just yet within my ken,
Though nothing dearer is to poet's pen.

Among the daintiest of the forest pets,
Are the green-mantled, purple violets ;

The shady woodland ground they cover thickly,
And live their happy lives, but die too quickly.

There, too, we find the stars of Bethlehem ;
And "lords and ladies" on their broad-leaved stem

The fragile bind-weed clinging to its vine,
And the red bells of nodding columbine.

And by the brook-side gladly we behold,
The yellow clusters of marsh-marigold.

May brings the dandelions' sunny shields,
To mingle with new grass in open fields.

And dear old buttercups and daisies dear,
Seem sweeter, fresher to our hearts each year.

Though summer gardens wing with joy the hours,
Nothing is better loved than Spring's wild flowers.

THE LITTLE BROWN BROOK.

A LITTLE brown brook ran down 'mid the grass,
At the end of a field that I often pass ;
And through the glad months of April and May,
It laughed in the sunshine and sang on its way.

So transparent it was, that on looking down
I saw all that lay 'neath its waters brown ;
Though rough was the floor filled with jagged stones,
It sang o'er them all in its merriest tones.

I never passed by but I lingered to hear
The rippling of music that greeted my ear ;
When clouds had been generous in sending soft rain,
Then loudest and clearest the merry brook's strain.

As the grass grew taller and taller each day,
And bent to and fro in the breeze's sway,
To the brook's glad singing, the long spires lent
An Æolian-harp accompaniment.

But summer came on with its sultry heat,
And a languor weighed down my weary feet,
So that the rambles in forest and field
Ceased for awhile their refreshing to yield.

One day, longing sore for the singing brook,
My accustomed way through the woods I took,
And came to the field full of daisies and grass,
But never a sound did I hear, alas !

I parted the grasses so thick and high
That had half hid the brook from passers-by,
And had lent their own to its musical voice
That ever seemed calling, rejoice, rejoice !

There was its bed with the jagged stones,
But silent, alas ! were its jubilant tones :
Brief life to the little brown brook was given,
The midsummer heat had exhaled it to heaven.

So oft a young spirit, guileless and bright,
Glides through its spring-time in song and delight ;
But when on its pathway life's hot summer lies,
It passes in silence, exhaled to the skies.

NATURE'S GIFTS FREE TO ALL.

IF the great sun that's rising now,
Arose for me alone,
And last night's moon with marble brow,
For me, me only, shone ;

I should not feel a stronger thrill
Of joy in morning's light,
Nor sweeter peace more calm and still,
In the soft moon-bathed night.

If all the stately trees that stand
Within my daily ken,
Upon the lawn and meadow land,
And by the shadowy glen ;

And if my neighbor's garden fair
Where I have leave to walk,
And drink the fragrance in the air
From bush and bending stalk,—

If every flower, and field, and tree,
Were mine, possessed by right,
They'd be no dearer unto me,
No fairer in my sight.

Nature is governed by no rules
Of individual rights ;
Alike on wise men, and on fools,
She lavishes delights.

Lavish and liberal to all,
The earth, the sky's expanse,
Poor men, as well as rich, may call
Their own inheritance.

But all her varied works, so grand,
So mighty, so minute,
Speak to the souls that understand,
To others they are mute.

O be it mine to listen well,
With open heart and ear,
And understand each syllable
Of what I hold so dear.

ODE TO THE MONTH OF MAY.

TOO many cloudy critics say
That thou art not like old-time May,
When all the world was young;
When poets in ecstatic lays,
And choicest epithets of praise,
Thy varied beauties sung.

I care not to look back, and see
The by-gone Mays of memory,
The present is so dear;
Sweet, tender, blushing month, thou art
A growing joy to my fond heart,
Increasing year by year.

Increasing every day and hour,
The joy of sunshine after shower,
Of fragrance in the air;
Of watching buds their gems unfold,
Spotting with stars of green and gold,
The boughs so lately bare.

The joy of rambling through the woods,
Which, true to our most hopeful moods,
Ring loud with harmony;
Birds having built their April nests,
Pour out the music of their breasts,
Each in its chosen key.

The crimson-hooded woodpecker,
The oriole, and tanager,
Come with thy earliest days ;
And robins, wrens, and thrushes sweet,
All through thy month in concert meet,
To carol forth thy praise.

We stand and listen, and look up,
Our heart o'erflowing, like a cup
Filled over-full with wine ;
Nature's rich nectar thou dost give,
With thee new life we seem to live,
Each sense thou dost refine.

Violets and anemones
Spring up in crowds between the trees,
As through the woods we walk ;
And young green ferns uncurling, twine
With bells of dark red columbine,
Drooping from slender stalk.

In every garden, orchard, field,
O May, what blossoms thou dost yield,
Perfect in form and hue !
The double cherry, white as snow,
The peach and apple, with a glow
Of pale pink glinting through.

And when just half thy race is run,
And fruit-flow'rs fall, their brief bloom done,
The dog-wood trees still bear—

(Their laden boughs extending wide)
A dower of blossoms, that a bride
Might well be proud to wear !

And lilies of the valley, thou
Doth bring to us, whose broad leaves bow
Over their ivory bells ;
And near them, o'er the same dark mould,
Laburnum drops its spires of gold,
And of thy sunshine tells.

And not far off, upon the edge
Of these domains, there stands a hedge
Of lilac, and the breeze
Brings from the purple plumes and white,
Sweet odors full of fresh delight,
And joyous memories.

And on the summer-house, and high
Upon the cottage-roof near by,
Wisteria's purple wreaths
Hang in luxurious excess,
And her too short-lived loveliness
Still of thy bounty breathes.

Beloved May, thy charm is this :
That thou dost lavish some new bliss,
Entrancing eye and ear,
With every morning of thy stay ;
Until the last, the parting day,
When thou must disappear !

MAY-DAY, 1885.

MAY-DAY comes in weeping, sobbing,
With her robes dishevelled,
And her bosom aching, throbbing,
For the storm has levelled—
Levelled to the very earth,
All her hopes of spring-time mirth !

From an ambush slyly hidden,
A fierce, steel-clad legion
Darted out, by Winter bidden
To usurp Spring's region :
And poor May-day, unprepared,
Is snow-bound and frost-ensnared.

Well she may be, and with reason,
Cast down and despairing,
As she thinks of many a season
In old England faring ;
When, instead of snow and sleet,
She was crowned with chaplets sweet.

As she stands there comes a vision
Of past out-door dances :
Greeting her with songs elysian
A bright band advances,—
Fife and flute and tambourine,
O'er the smooth-shorn village green :

Fairest children, fresh and rosy
As the hawthorn blossoms ;
Maidens, each with true love posy
Knotted on their bosoms ;
One, all wreathed around with flowers,
Queen of the few merry hours !

But cheer up, sad May-day, shivering
In the snow-flakes' flurry,
Soon warm sunshine will be quivering
In a generous hurry
To atone for Winter's wrong ;
Then, how sweet and glad thy song !

MY CHESTNUT-TREES.

THE shadows of the chestnut-trees
Lie on the grass below ;
And with each touch of the light breeze,
They waver to and fro.

Each spreading bough, and slender spray
Of pointed leaves, are seen ;
In softest lines of black and gray,
Drawn on the golden green.

And which to earnest eyes of love,
Is fuller of delight,—
The archways of the trees above
In their grand breadth and height,

Or the clear outlined photograph,
That lies so dark and still,
Save when the wind with merry laugh,
Ruffles it at her will.

Which most enchains my happy gaze,
Is something hard to tell ;
I'm like a lover filled with praise
Of her he loveth well.

Her very shadow on the ground,
The waving of her dress,
The radiance she sheds around,
Are perfect happiness.

And so, with me, 'tis bliss to sit
And watch the shining hues
That through these tall trees gleam and flit,
With sunrise-tinted dews.

To hear before my window-pane
The early thrushes sing,
And with their sweet, clear, glad refrain,
Make the green arches ring.

There, the bright golden oriole,
Perched on the topmost spray,
Thrills with a sudden power the soul
That listens to his lay.

There, too, the robin warbles well
His touching tremolo,
Sometimes with quick ecstatic swell,
And then, detached and slow.

And there, the merry cat-bird's note,
So various and strong,
Pulsating through his up-turned throat,
Out-rivals all in song.

No wonder that my chestnut-trees,
Among my joys, are chief !
Now comes the laughing summer breeze,
And lifts up every leaf,—

Reminding me, with rustling stir,
And whispered, soft desire,
That I have not yet given her
Due honor in my choir.

O precious summer wind, thou art
The spirit of my trees,
Without thee they would lack the heart,
And energy to please.

Thou givest movement, grace, and life ;
And when the birds with thee
Unite in sweet and sportive strife,
And loving harmony,

My happiness is so entire,
My spirit seems to fly,—
Sings, like the leader of the choir,
And soars into the sky !

THE SKY.

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handiwork."—PSALM xix. 1.

THE heavens declare God's glory !
Nothing upon the earth,
No rocks or mountains hoary,
No woods of ancient birth,—
No meadow-lands elysian,
With happy flocks and herds,
No heart-contenting vision
Of flowers and brooks and birds,—
No river, like an arrow
That cleaves the earth across,
No chasm dark and narrow,
Where foaming cascades toss,—
No storm upon the ocean,
No calm upon the sea,—
Doth in such varied motion,
Such boundless majesty,
Show forth God's work before us,
As the strong firmament ;
Which ever spreadeth o'er us
A world-embracing tent.

O look up in the morning—
Day's earliest, purest prime—
Ere the broad sun gives warning
To the drowsy world of time.
How the sweet light is parted,
While the pale stars go out ;
How herald rays glad-hearted,
Fling rosy wreaths about,
Till like a bridegroom singing
From his open doors, at length
The sun comes forth, up-springing
Like a giant in his strength ;
And then, the red wreaths dying,
The thin white moon on high
Is the sole shadow lying
Upon the fresh blue sky.

But look, not long endureth
This clear and spotless blue,
For one cloud comes, and lureth
Another, and they two
Above the horizon slumber
In beauty till mid-day,
When they rise to join a number
Of fairy clouds at play !
In the cornfield and the meadow
Where the hot sunbeams lurk,
They cast a cooling shadow
On the laborers at work.
And in sweet, loving pity,
They float in glory, where

The maiden in the city,
Longs for the mountain air ;
And as she sadly gazes
Over the chimney-tops,
That glory quickly raises
Her sad heart, and it stops
To beat with pulse redoubled,
As she thinks, with wonder, why
For the mountains was she troubled,
When bright clouds in the sky,
Like lofty Alpine mountains
Crowned with transparent snows,
Or like pure crystal fountains
With dazzling spray, uprose.
How sweet she finds each duty
By such a vision made,
The varied forms of beauty,
Their whiteness and their shade !
Though brief and transitory,
God scattereth each bright cloud
To utter forth His glory,
With silent speech endowed.

Look up when storms assemble,
Ranging from south and north,
When heaven's huge pillars tremble
As they come rolling forth.
How their fierce armies darken
The face of the fair sky ;
They meet, they shout—oh, hearken
To that long peal on high !

All living things, in wonder
And terror, hide their eyes,
As from the realms of thunder
The fiery lightning flies ;
Black heavy hailstones flinging,
The waters leap and roar,
And mighty winds are springing
To join the furious war.
Now look ! each storm is fluttering ;
Neither has victory won ;
For south and north low muttering
Retire before the sun.
That long roll is a token
That the battle must give o'er,
And through the ranks, now broken,
See the proud conqueror !
He comes a king victorious,
The whole earth smiles to view
His golden crown so glorious,
His robes of purple hue,—
She smiles to see him sending
Athwart the tempests' path
A royal rainbow, bending
To appease its angry wrath ;
A herald clad in splendor,
He offers from above,
A covenant sweet and tender
Of reconciling love.

Look up when day is lying
In the lap of twilight gray,

Her sunset smiles all dying,
And faint each roseate ray.
Look, when the vision varies,
And evening with a sigh,
Lights up the sanctuaries
Of the soft solemn sky :
Look up and try to number
The stars, as, one by one,
They wake fresh from the slumber
That shuts them from the sun.
The fixed stars in their stations,
The sudden shooting star,
The pictured constellations,
How beautiful they are !
Orion, and the seven
Mild sister Pleiades,
Through their pure home in heaven
Shedding sweet influences.
O look, and hail the story
The stars in chorus sing,
"The heavens declare the glory
Of God," the Eternal King !

A LAMENT FOR MIDSUMMER-DAY.

MIDSUMMER-DAY is over,
Dead is dear Midsummer-day !
But the bees suck still in the clover,
And butterflies haunt the hay.

Sweet-scented grass is falling
Under the hay-maker's scythe,
And quails from the thicket are calling
" *Bob White*," so merry and blithe.

Wrens and robins and thrushes,
Waken the morn with their song :
And a fountain of music gushes
From Nature all the day long.

Roses in richness are blooming,
Crimson, and yellow, and white.
The wayward breezes perfuming
With generous love and delight.

Yet there's a something vanished,
As transient as it was dear ;
The infinite freshness is banished,
With the longest day of the year.

And so I lament like a lover,
And murmuring sadly,—say
Midsummer-day is over,
Dead is dear Midsummer-day !

A RHYME.

GLAD the growing evenings
Of April and of May,
When sunlight loves to linger
Till sweet Midsummer's finger
Mingles the night with day.

Sad the lessening evenings,
Though sunset skies are bright,
When o'er the woods and dingles
The pale November mingles
The shrunken day with night.

SUNLIGHT.

RADIANT—joyful sunlight,
Thou alone art worth
All the city's gaieties,
All the city's mirth.

Sooner would I watch thee,
Hidden and alone—
Than behold the richest pomp
Where proud man is known.

Even there thou lendest
Brightness to the bright,
Diamonds and rubies flash
With thy borrowed light.

Beauty is more beautiful
When thy beams are there,
Dancing o'er the graceful form,
And the silken hair.

But in vain, bright sunlight,
Are thy gifts bestowed,
Though the glories prized so much,
To those gifts are owed.

Few look on thy radiance
Straight from heaven sent,
And give back their thanks to thee
Full of glad content.

Few look on the rainbow
With its colors seven,
And bless thy influence on the shower
Sunlight out of heaven.

But my spirit loves thee,
And it never could
In the loneliest spot with thee
Find a solitude.

Sweet it was to mark thee
Pouring such a shower
Of jewelled light in early morn,
On each dewy flower.

Sweet—upon the river
To behold each wave
Sparkling with the glorious gem,
Which thy bounty gave.

And it was still sweeter
(How my spirit danced)
To see the cloud-born shadows fly
As thy smiles advanced.

Then, like thoughts of heaven,
Thou didst seem to me,

Before which the cares of earth
Like dark shadows flee.

Even in the city,
'Mid its busy hum,
Where Nature is not ever seen,
Thou dost gladly come.

Thou quiverest, like the spirit
Of the warm south breeze,
Even on each dusky leaf
Of the fenced-in trees.

Thou a verdant freshness
Joyfully dost bring,
To the blades of lonely grass,
'Mid the stones that spring.

Like the LOVE that formed thee,
Thou from heaven dost fall,
Ever warm, and ever new,
Ever free to all.

CLOUDS.

WHAT are the clouds like, on a day
When Summer holds supremest sway?

They are like the foam on sapphire sea,
When the winds are blowing merrily.

Or like the phantom ships that sail,
With ghosts for sailors, in calm or gale.

Or like some towering Alpine height
Dazzling with snow and glaciers bright.

Sometimes like grand imperial thrones,
Made of marble and jasper stones.

When thunders gather with heavy roll,
And lightnings flash from pole to pole,

Then are the clouds like spirits lost,
Driven by the wind and tempest-tost :

Full of tumult and frantic woe,—
Like the Last Judgment of Angelo.

When the sun goes down of a Summer night,
No pencil can paint the pageant bright.

Sometimes the clouds are like golden hair
Floating from heads of children fair ;

Or like a feast all out of our reach,
Of purple grapes and roseate peach :

Or like rich curtains with crimson folds,
Where the enchanted eye beholds

The forms of angels lying at rest,
With silver wings folded upon their breast.

RAIN AFTER DROUGHT.

LIKE the tramp of a troop of horse,
With clanging, metallic hoof,
Rings the measured and ceaseless course
Of the rain on my cottage roof.

But unlike the cavalry tramp,
Whose noise is full of dismay,
Bringing thoughts of the field and the camp,
Where death and famine hold sway;—

This ringing and rhythmic beat
Of the rain on my roof above,
Brings thoughts that are soothing and sweet,
Of plenty, and peace, and love.

It dispels the fear and the doubt
Fretting on so many brains,
Because of the lengthened drought,
Theme of such dolorous strains.

The springs, people say, are so sad,
That used to bubble and laugh,
With the fulness of life they had,
A joy in their own behalf!

And the wells in each household yard
Are getting so low, they say,
That, if rain comes not, 'twill be hard
To slake the thirst of one day.

And the farmer thinks of his crops,
Of the pittance they must yield,
When the dried-up furrow-tops
Are dust-heaps in every field.

And his wife with many a sigh
Thinks of all her family needs ;
Of the cistern's scanty supply,
And the sickness that it breeds :

Of the cold-water bath she loves
To plunge her little ones in ;
Admiring the snow-white doves
That make such undove-like din !

And her maids—of the washing-tub—
For the linen can never be white,
How hard soever they rub,
If the water flows not aright.

Now a thousand thanks to the rain !
List to its musical drops,
And think of the thirsty plain,
The garden, the meadow, the copse.

Think of the streams and the brooks,
How the happy and grateful springs

Will leap up with laughing looks
When to-morrow the sunshine brings.

Now the farmer will smooth his brow;
And the mother will feel her care
For household and little ones, now,
Melt off into empty air.

And the women will work and sing,
And the linen look white as snow,
For this bountiful rain will bring
Relief to the high and the low.

And the poet will set his rhyme
To the tuneful key of the rain,
Which in triplets of perfect time
Patters down upon roof and pane.

And the man who believes in God,
And knows that His word is true;
That the elements, at His nod,
Only do what He bids them do;—

He will chant with the church's crowd
In hearty thanksgiving strain,
To Him who rules sun and cloud,
And the early and latter rain.

THE SKYLARK'S CREED.

Glad as the lark at heaven's gate fair
Singing its matin creed.

I BELIEVE, I believe in God !
Sings the lark, as up from the sod,
Where he leaves his belovèd nest
Safe concealed in its twilight rest,
He mounts with a wavering flight,
Till the pearly dews of the night
Are shook from his fluttering wings.
Then up, like an arrow, he springs,
Soaring swiftly higher and higher,
As if he were late for the choir
That meets in the far azure height,
To mingle with love and delight,
And the fervor of seraphim,
Their carol and anthem and hymn;
Adoring, with rapturous mirth,
The "Maker of heaven and earth."

I believe it is good to be here,
Sings the lark, in the æther clear ;
To watch the gold gates of the East
Roll up, while the morning's high priest
Comes wrapt in his light, like a robe,
To visit with blessings the globe !

'Tis good to be soaring so free,
Where the angels make melody.
'Tis good to behold the blue space
Where the winds and the clouds are at chase,
Where the bountiful, beautiful rain
Is formed from the dewes of the plain ;
And the rainbow, the flag of heaven,
Shines out with its colors seven !

I believe in His love and His power,
Who ruleth the wind and the shower ;
Whose kingly, compassionate care,
Disdains not the birds of the air ;
And when, from the musical top
Of some island-like cloud, I drop
Right into the nest where my mate
And little ones lovingly wait
For the news of the upper sky—
So distant to them and so high—
For the carols and hymns of love
I have learnt in the choir above—
I sing to my nest in the sod,
I believe, I believe in God.

PELHAM WOODS.

THERE are no woods like Pelham woods,
The Pelham people say ;
So sunlit are their solitudes,
So shadowy, yet so gay.

For in that pleasant forest realm
Lives many a gallant tree ;
The maple, beech, and graceful elm,
And hard-grained hickory.

Broad-breasted chestnut-trees stand there,
And hospitably treat
The squirrels, chipmunks, children fair,
With dainty nuts to eat.

Large families of fern unite
To make these woods their home,
And roaming maidens take delight
To pluck them as they roam.

And in the early Spring, or ere
St. Patrick turns the stone,
Pale wind-flowers, firstlings of the year,
Peep forth, so bravely lone.

Then in sweet groups come, by and by,
The violets, blue and white ;
And tiny stars of Bethlehem vie
With dandelions bright.

And lords and ladies,* cloaked in green,
Stand proudly in the shade ;
Indifferent if they are seen,
Nor of neglect afraid.

And in the Pelham woods you meet
With boulders black and gray :
And moss-grown stones form many a seat
For those who thither stray.

And overspreading table-rocks
The moss and myrtle wreath ;
While mountain pink, and wild white phlox,
Grow in the rifts beneath.

All they who are by music stirred,
Should walk these woods in May,
Where many an unrhymed song is heard,
And many a roundelay.

The oriole's clear mellow flute,
The thrushes' fairy bell,
Will make your very breathing mute,
Lest you should break the spell.

* Wild woodland plants.

And they who love sweet scents to smell,
And fragrant floors to tread,
Whose rich-hued carpetings excel
Those by the Persians spread,

Should come when mild October weaves
Her web of red and gold,
And gives the south wind her gay leaves,
O'er forest paths to fold.

I've wandered there in Spring's glad prime,
And in the Autumn's glow,
But could not tell you at what time
It would be best to go.

And when the Pelham people say
No woods so fair are known,
Come hither some delicious day,
And make their creed your own.

MORE LIGHT.

THE crisp leaves, wetted by the rain,
Are loosened easily,
And with a breath they seem full fain
To drop off from the tree ;
Then in the wind's soft arms they lie,
As if they were well pleased to die.

And as I gaze up through the trees
That shut my cottage in,
Whose foliage thus, with each light breeze,
Gets every hour more thin,
Fresh light, from sky unseen till now,
Falls like a blessing on my brow.

And in the forest, o'er the field,
Gray boulders, mossy green,
And winding wood paths are revealed
Which were before unseen,
With upland slopes and curvèd glades,
Once hid by summer's leafy shades.

These comfort me with promise sweet,
That so, in life, perchance,—
As fall youth's warm hopes at my feet,
And chilling years advance,—

The storm-made gaps, the tear-washed space,
Will only to *more light* give place.

Light to discern—what joy had veiled
 With leaves of rose and gold,
That gladdened for a while, then paled
 And dropped in deathly cold—
More of the firm, eternal Rock,
That stedfast stands earth's rudest shock.

More of the ways, unseen before,
 By which God leads us on
To walk with Him, and trample o'er
 Earth's pleasures dead and gone ;
And see, with heaven-illumined eyes,
The glades and hills of Paradise.

OCTOBER.

THE days are one long golden glow,
Toned by the softest sky ;
If, now and then, a cloud hangs low,
It passes quickly by.

It is a summer temperature,—
Although the morns and eves
Are fresh and cool, with breezes pure
Born amid autumn leaves.

The forest outlines swim in tints
That gladden heart and eye,
And tempt the painter with sweet hints
Their splendor to outvie.

Warm reds of every shade are set
With yellow, gold, and bronze ;
While summer's green is found, ev'n yet,
In all that autumn dons.

The sombre cedar, and his bride,
The fond Virginia vine,
Whose crimson is October's pride,
Their colors intertwine.

Beauty is lavish everywhere ;
We cannot indoors stay,
But wander—loading the soft air
With blessings—all the day.

INDIAN SUMMER.

A TENDER mist of softest silver-gray
Hangs on the horizon's edge, and half conceals
The upper line of forests far away ;
While o'er the nearer trees there gently steals
The mellow love-light of the autumn sun,
Marking the forms and colors of each one.

The cedar, hemlock, and the lofty pine,
Are green and dark as in the months gone by;
The elms are yellow, oaks and maples shine
With lustrous leaves of red and purple dye;
While some bare boughs and boles are ghostly white,
And glance out sharply through the misty light.

Even the azure noonday sky, where floats
A fleet of filmy clouds, is tinged with mist ;
And the calm river, with its white-winged boats,
Glides through a haze of pearl and amethyst,
With ripples here and there upon its breast,
Caused by the kisses of the soft southwest.

Sweet Indian Summer, beautiful and dear,
Angel of tender pitying love art thou ;
For when thou seest the sad declining year
Ready beneath her coming fate to bow,
Thou dost revive awhile her fainting form
With breath of fragrance, and caresses warm.

THE SEA.

"The sea is His, and He made it."—PSALTER xciv. 5.

"THE sea is His, and He made it," chants
The Church in its morning psalm ;
"The sea is His, and He made it," haunts
My heart with its music calm.

Again and again, when crossing o'er
The Atlantic's stormy tide,
I heard those words through the tempest's roar,
And all fear was pacified.

And now, not upon, but near the sea,
In this home upon the beach,
I look, and listen at liberty,
To learn what its waters teach.

Obedience, order, and fearless awe,
Are some of its lessons grand ;
Order, whose musical measures draw
The line of the shifting sand.

'Here shall the pride of thy waves be stayed,
No further come, and no higher";
Eternal law is at once obeyed,
And the tossing waves retire.

I watch them run up, and then recede ;
Worshipping God as I gaze ;
"The sea is His"—my unshaken creed ;
"He made it"—my song of praise.

I hear the shouts of the crested crowd,
Running, like brothers, abreast ;
One in the chorus with voice more loud,
And head more high than the rest.

Under all aspects of sun and star,
And under the harvest moon ;
When clouds embroidered the floods afar,
With the heat of August noon ;—

When boreal lights, in fay-like dance,
Have flitted across the north,
And when shooting stars, with meteor glance,
Have suddenly darted forth ;—

I've sat and mused in a silent spell,
Entranced by the ocean bright ;
And which I loved most, I could not tell,
Morning, or evening, or night.

But this I have felt, at every hour,
That God was the King thereof ;
The storm displaying His infinite power,
The sunshine His perfect love.

THE VENTURESOME SPARROW.

(AN INCIDENT ON BOARD SHIP.)

WE were three days out on the ocean,
Afar from the woodland earth,
Where robins build in the bushes green,
And thrushes carol their mirth,
When a poor little sparrow fluttered
Through the port-hole of our berth.

“Now where did you come from, birdie,
Did you come from that garden rare
Where thy little brown brothers assemble,
To gather their dainty fare,
From the hands of a loving lady
Who gives all things her watchful care?

“Did you come on an errand, birdie,
With a message from her to me?
Or, wert thou growing a-weary
Of the woodland melody?
Didst thou think the green grass less lovely
Than the emerald waves of the sea?

“Come tell me thy story, birdie,
Hast thou fallen perchance in love
(168)

With one of these graceful sea-gulls,
That hover the waters above ;
So silvery-pure that their name should be
Not the gull, but ocean dove ?

“ Oh, birdie ! if such is thy story,
Fly home again, quickly fly,
For vain is thy love and hopeless
For one so stately and high ;
Fly back to thy little brown brothers,
And tell them thy tale and die.”

The poor little venturesome stranger
Flew off from the port-hole's rim,
Or maybe he dropped in the ocean,
Through the twilight misty and dim,
But I know he never made answer
To the questions I put to him.

THE STORM AND THE STARS.

I WAS afraid one night at sea ;
So rolled the ship in cavernous waves,
From which came groans of misery,
And shrieks, as when a maniac raves.

I rose, and to my port-hole clung,
Scarce hoping to see aught but dark
Wild chaos, o'er the waters flung,
Where leapt and fell our creaking ark.

But, searching through the waste so drear,
I saw a sphinx-like cloud, whose head,
All inky black, loomed o'er us near,
As 'mid the yawning gulfs we sped.

And up, beyond the sphinx-like cloud,
I saw a clear clean space of sky,
In which Orion, bright and proud,
Stood, in his starry radiance high.

And the seven stars, the Pleiades,
Serenely smiled beyond the storm ;
'Mid tears of joy I smiled at ease,
Fear fled, and love and faith waxed warm.

Then did these words in memory wake :
Seek Him who maketh the seven stars,
And grand Orion ; * who can break
The morning bright, through death's dark
bars !

I sought and found Thee, Blessed One,
My morning star in life's dark night !
O ever thus bid clouds begone,
And fill my soul with heavenly light.

* Amos v. 8.

AT SEA.

IF God give quietness within
By His own peace and love,
The raging roar, the fearful din,
Beneath, around, above,
Cannot, with all their tripled noise,
Injure the music of our joys.

Above, the wind is hissing loud,
As if in angry spite ;
Around, the waves, a foaming crowd,
Leap to a dizzy height ;
Beneath, all monsters of the deep
Seem hammering at the iron ship.

My faith is trembling with affright :
But, Lord, I cry to Thee !
Control and stop this dangerous fight
Between the wind and sea ;
Silence these thunderings, louder far
Than summer's loudest thunders are !

But if it must not be, then, still
Give me in Thee to rest :
To lose my wishes in Thy will,
Is always to be blest.
In joy or grief, in storm or calm,
Submission to Thy will is balm.

THE BEATITUDES.

THE POOR IN SPIRIT.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
—MATT. v. 3.

HOW happy are the poor in spirit,
How cheerfully they dwell,
As if the kingdom they inherit,
Were heaven and earth as well !

If wealth is theirs, they are not troubled
To save it, or enlarge ;
But others' wants, with gifts redoubled,
They make their willing charge.

If low their lot, their heart is lowly,
Fearing no hurtful fall ;
Their highest aim is to be holy,
And find in God their all.

His will they meet with daily gladness,
As guide to their own will ;
Whether it bring them joy or sadness,
Good things or seeming ill.

If good, they sing aloud of mercies
To which they have no claim ;
If ill, they reckon griefs no curses,
If free from sin and shame.

The poor in spirit do not stumble
When dangers round them close ;
For brave and true, as well as humble,
They soon disarm their foes.

They bring no Pharisaic merit
To plead before God's eyes ;
A contrite heart and broken spirit
Is their one sacrifice.

They were the first the Saviour singled
From out the waiting throng,
Upon the lofty mountain mingled,
To hear of right and wrong.

They, in that sermon of the Saviour,
The world still ponders o'er,
Were first assured of heavenly favor,
Ev'n life for evermore !

Humility, self-abnegation,
Is Christ's most precious gem ;
He gives it foremost exaltation
In His own diadem.

And they who have that jewel hidden,
Treasured with constant care,
Though poor on earth, shall soon be bidden
A heavenly throne to share.

Who would not wrestle with affliction,
And conquer every sin,
To gain the crown of benediction
The "poor in spirit" win ?

MOURNERS COMFORTED.

"Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted."—**MATT.**

v. 4.

SHOW me, dear Lord, the blessedness
Of them that mourn and weep ;
Let me a share of it possess,
To calm my grief to sleep.

Oh, show me who the mourners are
That Thy sweet promise means,
Over whose clouds the cheering star
Of heavenly comfort leans.

Are they the "blessed"—weeping sore
Because their dearly-loved
Can tread earth's thorny paths no more,
But are to heaven removed ?

Are they the "blessed"—racked with pain,
Death hovering ever nigh,
And yet, through weary years, in vain
They wish and pray to die ?

Are they the "blessed"—fixed and pale,
With wonder and affright,
Because some babbling tongues assail
Their honor and their right ?

Are they the "blessed"—left alone
To face life's wintry storm ;
No loving voice to hush their moan,
No heart to make theirs warm ?

Are they the "blessed"—agonized
By sharing others' woes,
By seeing noble talents, prized,
Yet wasted to life's close ?

Are they the "blessed"—they who watch,
With sympathy unsought,
The mind diseased, intent to catch
One ray of lucid thought ?

Or, are they those who cry to Thee—
"Of sinners I am chief ;
O Lord, my sins take hold on me,
They make me faint with grief" ?

For all these troubled mourners, stirred
By storms of deep distress,
Is there—oh, show me,—in Thy Word
A promised blessedness ?

Yes ! "Comfort ye, oh, comfort ye,
My people, saith the Lord" !
Thy dead in Christ shall live with me,
Reaping a rich reward.

And thou who liest languishing,
With weary, throbbing head,
The Lord will strength and comfort bring,
And watch thy sleepless bed.

No cruel weapon that is thrown,
To strike thy peace or fame,
Shall injure either, when alone
Thou trustest in my name.

The very mountains shall depart,
The ancient hills remove,
But from thy lonely, long-tried heart
I will not take my love.

The wintry winds around thy home
Wail of thy darlings gone,
But, saith the Saviour, I will come
And make thy home my own.

The mysteries of many a lot
Of misery are sealed ;
For what I do thou now knowest not,
But it shall be revealed.

And oh, sad soul, whose broken prayer
Sobs out your grief for sin,
Ye shall be freed from your despair,
And drink full pardon in.

Your songs shall sweeter be than all
That ring with joyful sound ;
For "sinners" Jesus came to call,
The "lost" He sought and found.

There's not a pain or deadly woe
That blights the human race,
But finds a plant of healing grow
Within God's field of grace.

O sweet and soothing, kind and good,
Welcome to hearts forlorn,
This wonderful beatitude—
"Blessed are they that mourn."

THE MEEK PORTRAYED.

"Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth."—MATT. v. 5.

THE world looks down upon the meek,
And scorns the very name,
But heaven's high laws for them bespeak
A heaven-recorded fame.

For them the Lord of heaven declares
Himself will teach His way,
Guiding in judgment, that life's snares
May lead them not astray.

Blest are the meek, for they possess
In patience their own souls ;
No passion, longing, or distress,
Usurps them, or controls.

They never feel the vexing pain
That jealousy begets,
Nor are disquieted in vain
By any vain regrets.

Blest are the meek, for rich content
Makes them, in tenure free,
The heirs of all enjoyments, blent
With earth, or air, or sea.

Blest is the wisdom of the meek,
Divine their maxims wise :
"Be swift to hear, and slow to speak,
Slow to let anger rise."

Be swift to hear, that what is heard
May the true meaning give ;
The missing of one little word
Makes even truth deceive.

Be slow to speak, and that will show
How slow to wrath thou art ;
The tongue well governed curbs the flow
Of passion in the heart.

Silence is like the summer dews
Distilling in the night ;
A happy freshness they diffuse
Against returning light.

Silence is like a golden gate
Opening to fields serene,
Where quiet souls walk separate
From anger, pride, and spleen.

Forgiving, are the meek, and just ;
Committing what is done
By envious hate, in simple trust
To the All-seeing One.

The spirit is but unseen breath,
Yet, like the unseen wind,
It scatters desolating death,
In rage and fury blind.

The meek, who rule their spirit well,
Resemble Him whose will
Brings down the whirlwind's angry swell,
Bids howling storms be still.

Just like them, Lord, I fain would be ;
And unto Thee I turn,
Meekness and lowliness of Thee,
And only Thee, to learn.

THE SOUL'S HUNGER AND THIRST.

"Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."—**MATT. v. 5.**

LORD, give me evermore
A portion from that store
Which, when dispersed, grows never less ;
The manna from above
Of Thy sweet peace and love,
Thy pure and strengthening righteousness.

Lord, is it not indeed
The craving of deep need,
The utter emptiness of good,
That prompts these urgent cries,
For liberal supplies
Of unmixed satisfying food ?

May it not be a sign
Of coming health divine
That thus I hunger for Thy truth ?
A sign that, deep within,
The malady of sin
Has loosed its deadly serpent-tooth ?

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Alas ! I cannot tell,
But this I know full well,
I faint to be made wholly Thine ;
To be sustained and fed
By Thee, the Living Bread,
And gladdened by Thee, Living Vine.

Oh, make my faith so just,
Such unsuspecting trust,
Founded upon Thy steadfast word,
That I may take my share
Of sorrow, and of care,
Without a murmuring question stirred.

Grant that my truth may be
Perfected, Lord, in Thee ;
So that each deep unspoken thought,
May be as clear as light
Created in Thy sight,
Never with false vain fancies fraught.

Purge Thou my charity
That it may spotless be ;
And, that I may Thy law fulfil,
Show me who are my foes,
That I may pray for those,
And do them good, who work me ill.

Attune my temper, Lord,
So that its every chord
May ready be for love and praise ;

That no harsh sound be heard,
 No sullen, angry word,
 That may a jarring discord raise.

And that this may be so,
 I pray that there may grow
 And blossom in my weedy heart,
 That plant of fragrance rare,
 Humility so fair,
 Whose very breath can peace impart.

And root out every thorn
 Of haughtiness and scorn,
 That might awaken sudden pain ;
 And smother every seed
 Of an ambitious greed,
 Whether for honor, love, or gain.

Grant that my prayers may be
 From all self-seeking free ;
 That so I may with untired heart
 For others ever pray,
 The near, and far away,
 Knowing how close to all Thou art.

I would my spirit were
 Inwrought with all things fair,
 All honest things of good report,
 Lovely and true and pure,
 So that it might ensure
 A passport to Thy heavenly court.

THE SOUL'S HUNGER AND THIRST. 187

And this can only be
When grafted into Thee !
Then will its yearnings all be stilled,
Hunger and thirst be blest
When in Thyself they rest,
And feel Thy promise is fulfilled.

THE LAW OF LOVE.

"Blessed are the merciful : for they shall obtain mercy."—MATT. v. 7.

"Be ye, therefore, merciful, as your Father is also merciful."—LUKE vi. 36.

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."—HEB. iv. 16.

OH, thou who, at the mercy-seat,
Dost kneel God's mercy to entreat,
Without which thou wouldst languish,
Let every pressing time of need
Wake in thy heart an earnest heed
For others' woe and anguish.

There, at that incense-breathing place,
The covenant-guarded throne of grace,
There only, help is given,
To govern sympathy and love
According to His rule above,
Who blesses earth and heaven.

Not in great charities alone,
Are the sweet traits of mercy shown ;
But in ways dark and lonely,
Where heart to heart is felt the throb,
The hot tears dried, and hushed the sob,
Witnessed by angels only.

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Some say that charity is cold ;
It may be so, perchance, when gold
Is given in ostentation ;
A noble deed ignobly done,
That praise and honor may be won,
 That is a cold oblation.

But mercy is not mixed with pride,
It is a pure perennial tide,
 The whole life fertilizing ;
It brings forth self-denying deeds,
For misery and want it pleads,
 No low estate despising.

It has a native inborn strength,
That can endure as great a length
 As are earth's paths of weeping ;
No path of pain, despair, or wrong,
For mercy is too rough or long,
 Her hold on heaven still keeping.

Thou who art strong in youth and health,
Love mercy ; thou, whose wasted wealth
 Might warm a hundred hovels,
Scatter thy bounties near and far,
Where lonesome age and sickness are,
 And pining penury grovels.

But thou who hast no wealth to spare,
Thy pity and thy tender care,
 Thy helpful hands of labor,

Thy gentle words of sympathy,
Shall surely one day reckoned be
As mercy to thy neighbor.

And look within thy happy home,
For mercy bids thee not to roam ;
Perhaps some erring brother
Has come up to the well-known door,
To seek the sheltering roof once more,
Of father and of mother.

Shall he be chilled by withering look,
Or taunted with a proud rebuke,
Because of his ill-doing ?
Shall loved ones leave him with disdain,
When, with a deep repentant pain,
He comes for mercy suing ?

Oh, mother, father, sisters, no !
Let not the sin-soiled wanderer go,
Let not his spirit harden ;
But soften it with heart-warm tear,
With words he has so longed to hear,
Of welcome and of pardon.

Let all thy conversation shed
Glad sunshine ; let no word be said
Of cutting edge, though witty ;
For home-born wit and intellect
Should cheer and strengthen, not dissect
Unmoved by love or pity.

There is no happiness so sure,
So sweet, so unalloyed, so pure,
As that which love diffuses :
And rich the promise it obtains—
He that gives mercy, mercy gains,
Gains all the love he uses.

Oh, blessed in the last great day,
When books are opened to display
All secret things recorded,
Blessed the merciful shall be,
Crowned by God's mercy full and free
And evermore rewarded.

Lord, among all our prayers to Thee,
"Jesus, have mercy," is the plea
Uplifted night and morning ;
But wert Thou strict to mark our sins,
What holy wrath at once begins
Our sad entreaties scorning.

Judgment, not mercy, we deserve,
For oft, unwittingly, we swerve
From Thy dear rule of blessing ;
Neglecting chances Thou dost send,
To soothe, to succor, and befriend,
The wrongs of life redressing.

So when Thy servant, Death, draws near,
With messages of hope or fear,
To bring us our dismission,
No other prayer, beloved Lord,
But "mercy—mercy," oft implored,
Shall be our last petition.

THE PURE IN HEART.

"Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God."—**MATT. v. 8.**

ENTHRONED above the starry height,
All-glorious Lord, Thou art !
Fountain of holiness and light,
How can a sinner, in Thy sight,
Ever be pure in heart ?

My thoughts in earnest love dwell much
On this assurance given—
"Blest are the pure in heart"; made such
By Thy own sin-dispelling touch,
By grace and power from heaven.

Yet while I think, abased with awe,
Lord, "woe is me," I cry ;
As did Thy seer * of old, who saw
The dazzling doors of heaven withdraw,
To show Thy throne on high,—

And over it the seraphim,
With covered face and feet ;
The chorus of whose holy hymn
On waves of rapture seemed to swim
In harmony most sweet.

* Isaiah vi. 1-7.

Would that, like Him, I could receive
A flame of heaven-sent fire,
To be the token of reprieve
For sins, that to my spirit cleave
When it would fain aspire.

Methinks the pure in heart are they
Whose truth, like sunlight clear,
Brings their whole being into day,
Where no dark secrets dim the ray
Of the bright atmosphere.

They are without guile, genuine ;
They look, with single eye,
To Him who reads each line within
The book of their heart's discipline,
Intent each thought to try.

They keep their crystal conscience bright
From aught that might obscure ;
Undue affections—with their blight,
Unjust suspicions,—take their flight,
And darken not the pure.

They take not up the idle word
That spots their neighbor's name ;
And if a slander should be heard,
With pure angelic pity stirred,
They hush or hide the shame.

They feel no turbulent desires ;
Nor care they for the joys
That the proud, restless world inspires,
Sparkling with artificial fires,
And full of empty noise.

Their conversation is above,
God is in every thought ;
They walk on earth with joy and love,
Because so much of heaven they prove
Is with their life inwrought.

The pure in heart have free access
To their beloved Lord ;
Closer to Him they daily press,
To see Him is their blessedness,
Their promised rich reward.

By faith they see Him at their side
When troubles overwhelm ;
The swelling waves with crested pride
Shall not their low bark override,
When He is at the helm.

But their full time of joy is death,—
That rends the veil apart ;
Then face to face, and not by faith,
Shall they see God, whose Witness saith :
Blest are the pure in heart !

PEACE AND PEACEMAKING.

"Blessed are the peacemakers : for they shall be called the children of God."—MATT. v. 9.

PEACE may be likened unto Light,
("God's eldest daughter"* fair,)
In which harmonic hues unite,
Though not distinguished there ;
No separate color being seen
That helps to form the radiant sheen.

So peace is found, when analyzed,
To mingle many rays
Of rainbow beauty, dearly prized
On life's oft-clouded ways ;
Love, gentleness, and meekness, blent
With justice, honor, and content.

And they who would peacemakers be,
Themselves must peace possess ;
Their minds must meet the harmony
Of truth and righteousness ;
Their hearts must overflow with love
From the fresh springs of life above.

* Thomas Fuller (1608-1661).

To Thee we come, O Prince of Peace,
To Thee we bring our prayer !
Thou only canst bid discord cease ;
Thy sunshine everywhere
Can melt away and dissipate,
The storms of prejudice and hate.

Speed Thou Thy heralds o'er the world,
Who hold Thy Cross on high,
Like soldiers with their flag unfurled,
Thy fame to magnify,
Written in blood upon that Tree,*
That Thou our Peace with God might be.

We read that in the ancient days,
When men, with busy quest,
Would, for the ark of peace, upraise
A holy house of rest,
Thy Spirit every workman taught
Who on the sacred temple wrought.

We read "wise-hearted women" strove
To work their willing share ;
The priestly clothes of service wove,
And spun the hangings fair ;
And while their hands the distaff held,
With peace and praise their hearts up-welled.

Thy Spirit guided from on high
The loving, ready will,

* Colossians i. 20.

The planning brain, the steady eye,
 The finger's cunning skill :
 The impulse, then, Thy Spirit gave,
 Thy Church would, now, a suppliant crave.

In perfect peace preserve Thou those
 Who stay themselves on Thee ;
 So shall they give a calm repose,
 And shed serenity,
 On all within their atmosphere,
 Of love confiding and sincere.

These are the "peacemakers," who spin,
 Of love's strong silken thread,
 Broad cloaks of charity for sin ;
 By sweetest pity led
 A multitude of sins to hide
 From shafts of censure-loving pride.

These are wise-hearted workers ; strong
 In unsuspecting faith,
 They hush the rage of strife and wrong,
 To hear what justice saith ;
 And patiently their own speech curb,
 Lest speaking should the peace disturb.

"Blest are the peacemakers !" They stand
 Close to their Father, God ;
 His guiding eye, His leading hand,
 His smile, His chast'ning rod,
 Are all theirs *now* ; His home on high
 Shall be His children's, by and by.

O Father ! I would be Thy child ;
Mark me with signs divine,
Pure, gentle, peaceable, and mild—
Thus let my spirit shine,
Lit by these rays of heavenly love,
Filled with the wisdom from above.

Then should my hands and heart and brain,
Thy humble helpers be
To bring on earth the happy reign
Of peace and harmony,
And share the sweet effect secured
Of quiet trust and faith assured.

THE PARADOXICAL BEATITUDE.

"Blessed are the persecuted."—**MATT. v. 10, 11, 12.**

WE know how happy are the souls
Within whose tideless channel rolls
The river of contentment, bright
With heaven's own care-dispelling light :
Nor is it difficult to know
Mourners are blessèd in their woe,
When God Himself will condescend
To comfort them, as friend with friend :
We see that the unruffled state
Of patient men is grand and great :
We comprehend that Heav'n must bless
The hunger after righteousness ;
The thirst for God, must satisfy
With revelations from on high :
That blessed is the lot they gain
Who ease their fellow-creatures' pain ;
Whose mercy, shown in word and act,
Converts warm feeling into fact :
That happy is the guileless heart
Laid bare in its most secret part,
Though God alone can surely see
Its innocence and purity :

That they, whose silence and whose speech
 Have equal influence to reach
 The heart of strife, and there sow seeds
 Of fruitful peace, by peaceful deeds,—
 That they are happy, and shall be
 Blessèd of God and man, we see :—
 But who can, with an earth-dimmed eye,
 Behold the hidden thoughts that lie,
 With love past searching out imbued,
 In this last strange Beatitude.

Spirit that breathest from above,
 Spirit of holy fear and love,
 Spirit of wisdom and sound mind,
 Lend me thy sight, for I am blind !

Yet do I seem to see, and feel,
 Something of what those words reveal ;
 I seem to hear that voice so soft
 Raising its music, and aloft,
 And in sonorous tones and clear,
 Like a war-trumpet's, dread to hear,
 With all the Godhead's Majesty,
 Evolve this truth, this mystery,
 This paradox of mighty power,
 Never pronounced until this hour—
 "Blessed are ye when men shall curse
 Your names for my sake : and asperse
 With calumny, and cruel hate,
 The good they cannot imitate !

Blest are ye when men revile
With open insult, subtle guile ;
When coward envy, hungry pride,
Your innocent names shall cast aside ;
Suborning witnesses to come,
And with bold falsehoods strike you dumb.
Blessed are ye when men, to suit
Their haughty rage, shall persecute,
Shall stone to death, shall slay with sword,
Shall bring against you the fierce horde
Of savage dens, and beasts of prey.
Blessed are ye in that dark day,
Such fate the ancient prophets had :
Rejoice and be exceeding glad,
For great is your reward above,
Thrones, principedoms, glory, peace, and love."

Perhaps adown the mountain's base
The Preacher looked, and saw the face
Of saintly Stephen, lifted there ;
Saw the intent and soul-rapt air
With which he drank in the new truth ;
Though little did he dream, in sooth,
That first among that silent throng
To him this blessing should belong ;
That he should die for faith in Christ,
He, the first martyr sacrificed.

Perhaps the omniscient Master saw
Gamaliel's student of the law,

The young proud *Saul*, go passing by,
With purposely averted eye,
As if he would not choose be seen
To listen to the Nazarene !
Ah ! how he would recall the voice
That waited not his haughty choice,
But, suddenly, with piercing power,
Arrested him that noonday hour,
When sevenfold light shone round about
His hurried way, yet breathing out
His threats of slaughter and the sword
Against the followers of the Lord :
“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ?
'Tis hard for thee to wrestle now !
The Jesus whom thou wouldst not know,
The Christ of God, now stops thee,—lo,
He blinds thee from His opened skies.”
And then, perchance, with sightless eyes
That made the inner sight more clear,
He seemed to see the future, near ;
And, in a vision, could discern
What he should suffer in return ;
What persecutions, and what pains,
Perils and prisons, bonds and chains ;
And furthermore the vision's grace
Would show him how, in every place,
He would rejoice in want or shame,
If so he might Christ's Cross proclaim,
And count all things but loss to be
Its herald upon land or sea.

Years have gone by since martyrs bled,
And meekly laid the heroic head,
For truth's sweet sake, upon the block ;
But lives of every day unlock
Occasions for the pure and good
To prove this last Beatitude.
Unkindness, envy, pride, and hate,
Still persecute, and separate
From out their company, the few
Who to Christ's laws are leal and true.

In opposition and disdain,
Sometimes the humble are called vain ;
And poverty of spirit, is
Traduced to silly cowardice ;
And contrite mourners, pale and wan,
Are hypocrites, with grief put on :
The patient man, who meekly bears
Small provocations and large cares
With equal temper, is defamed,
For anger and impatience blamed :
The man who hungers after God,
To tread the steps the Saviour trod,
Has names derisive on him cast,
Fanatic and enthusiast :
The merciful are oft maligned
With selfish ends for actions kind :
The pure in heart and life have been
The subjects of imputed sin,
And suffered silently the pain
Of calumny's injurious stain :

And peacemakers have often borne
The persecutor's haughty scorn.

But while the "evil's falsely" said,
While persecution on their head
Falls for Christ's sake, they may "*rejoice*";
The benediction of His voice
Is their reward, their endless rest :
Blessed are they, forever blest.

ENFORCED IDLENESS.

(LINES WRITTEN AFTER BEING ADVISED TO PUT ASIDE BOOKS,
PENCILS, NEEDLES, ETC., AND REST THE EYES THOROUGHLY.)

HOW beautiful does light become, how dear,
When urged to close the eyes against its beams!
And Idleness enforced, how dark, how drear ;
Unless, perchance, some compensating gleams
From Thought and Fancy, may illumine its night,
And bring the records of the mind to light.

Yet Thought, alas ! is but a vagrant power,
She flies too swiftly, here and there, o'er earth,
And seldom settles down for one short hour.
I found, with eyes shut, nought of real worth
In Thought ; but Fancy came, and Memory, too,
And made the theme of blindness clear to view.

Fancy first travelled to a far-off clime,
And sketched, far better than my hands could
paint,
A picture of the patriarchal time ;
At his tent-door sad Isaac, tired and faint,
Sat in the sunshine which he could not see,
Stricken by blindness and adversity.

Jacob drew near with silent sly deceit,
 Arrayed in cunning with consummate care ;
False hands, that held the dish of spurious meat,
 (Kid dressed as venison for the old man's fare ;)
False speech, that made his father's sightless eyes
The means of furthering his selfish lies.

Art thou my first-born son, in very truth ?
 Come near, I pray thee, as I cannot see ;
Come let me feel thee, for thy voice, in sooth,
 Is Jacob's voice ;—nor shall my blessing be
Ensured to a deceiver ; but, enough,
The hands *are* Esau's, hairy hands and rough.

And Fancy pictures with more fervid skill
 The coming back of Esau from the hunt ;
Little dreams he of an impending ill,
 Impulsive, pleasure-loving, rash and blunt ;
He hastens to prepare the promised mess,
And claim the vow his father gave to bless.

Then Isaac hears the coming step, and cries
 Who art thou ? And the keen, incisive tone
Of certain truth fills him with dread surprise ;
 He trembles in his anguish, for well-known
Is now his first-born son ! But, oh, too late
To change the course of heaven-appointed fate.

And Esau lifted up his voice, and cried
 With an exceeding great and bitter cry—

The wail of wounded love and blasted pride,
 Hast thou one blessing only? Oh, deny
Me not, my father, bless even also me!
Shall not thy first-born son be blessed of thee?

Years in long centuries have followed years
 Since this sad tale of Bible-history,
But I can never read it without tears;
 The blind sire duped by selfish subtlety,
The heart-wrung cries of Esau, left forlorn,
His birthright sold, the blessing from him torn.

In my child-lore, the first blind man was he,
 Sad Isaac, the Assyrian patriarch.
Then the Greek poet of the Odyssey,
 With mind far-seeing, though his sight was dark;
Whose genius, an Argus hundred-eyed,
With life-drawn images the world supplied.

Then he, who sang (beside immortal strains
 Of Eden lost and Paradise regained,)
The hero Samson, conquered and in chains,
 And in his cruel blindness sorely pained
By keen remorse, for yielding up, at length,
The sacred secret of his God-given strength.

Milton! what was it to thy soul of light
 To see no more the stars, the silver moon,
The "saffron morn," the great sun glowing bright?
 "O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon!"

Yet joy was thine, for when God veiled **thine eyes**,
He gave thee visions of His Paradise.

And thou wert visited by angels fair ;
And spirits pure "in sweet societies"
Thronged to thy mind, where dwelt, in beauty rare
Thy inborn thoughts, and nurtured memories,
Of studious childhood in thy English home,
Of rich research in Florence, Naples, Rome.

And as thine inward gaze which ne'er could be
Obscured, or robbed of its keen piercing **power**,
Retraced thy life, again thou mightest see
Grand Galileo in his death-doomed hour ;
Again revisit Manso, and recall
The old man's story of sad Tasso's fall.

Thy blindness, glorious Milton, gave a boon
In which the world will evermore delight !
And of the many who, or late or soon,
Have known the drop-serene* which quenched
their sight,
None valued more that precious boon, than he
Whose fervor o'er thy poems, infused the same in me.

O father mine, lost for a little while,
How does thine image through my heart's tears
swim ;
Those eyes so clear, in which the genial smile,
Bright as at first before thy sight grew dim,

* *Gutta serena.*

Kindled anew, when thy deep resonant voice
Uttered the odes and sonnets of thy choice.

It was as much a part of the warm glow
That Christmas-eveshed o'er our household hearth,
As carols, feasts, holly, and mistletoe,
To hear—silenced awhile thy children's mirth—
Milton's grand "Hymn on the Nativity"
Read or recited, father dear, by thee.

KEPT DAILY FROM SIN.

“ Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep me this day without sin.”—**TE DEUM.**

VOUCHSAFE to keep me this day without sin,
Lord of all power and might !
My own strength never can the battle win,
When struggling for the right.

In the least matter there is right and wrong ;
O let Thy truth shine out,
To mark the way, and lead me all day long,
Through mists of chilling doubt.

Disperse the doubts that make me hesitate,
And hesitating, lose
The hours that hurry by, and cannot wait
While I the day's work choose.

Keep Thou my mind ; be Thou its polar-star
In the pure realms of thought ;
Keep Thou my heart, whose ceaseless issues are
With life and death full fraught.

Suspicion, pride, and jealousy are death :
Let me not fall therein ;
Let not a word, a whisper, or a breath,
Commit me to such sin.

Kindness, and truth, and love, and trust, are life ;
Give this full life to me ;
Let it spring up and overflow all strife
With streams of charity.

Pluck up each root of inborn, secret sin,
Let not one vain desire,
One self-willed wish, like a dead weight within,
Forbid me to aspire.

Thou art the rightful owner of each thought,
Then must they be subdued,
And in captivity to Christ be brought,
And by His love imbued.

Then, this unceasing prayer may hope to win
Acceptance in Thy sight ;
Vouchsafe to keep me this day without sin,
Lord of all power and might.

JOY TO ALL BELIEVERS.

"When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers."—TE DEUM.

THOU Mighty Conqueror of death,
Why should we be afraid to die ?
The giving up our mortal breath,
Is but the breathing of a sigh !

Pain ends when death's brief stroke begins ;
There is no sharpness in the blow,
For Thou didst bear it, when our sins
Were fastened to Thy cross of woe.

Death is, "to all believers," naught
But a blind porter at heaven's gate ;
He cannot see the splendor wrought
Upon the crystal walls of state.

And Death can never enter there,
Though he lets in Thy ransomed race,
The grand inheritance to share,
Each fitted for his chosen place.

There shall they know what passes thought,
The length, and breadth, and depth, and height,

Of all Thy patient love has wrought
To bring them to those mansions bright.

The mysteries of blinded woe
That blurred or veiled Thy justice here,
Thou wilt unfold, and deign to show
The reason for each heart-wrung tear.

Lord, if "*to all believers*," Thou
Hast opened wide Thy realm above,
And liberally dost endow
Thy loyal subjects with Thy love ;

Then may I hope when once passed by
The harmless touch of vanquished death,
Up through the golden doors to fly
And praise Thee with immortal breath.

DIVINE HELP IMploRED.

"We therefore pray Thee, help Thy servants, whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy precious blood."—TE DEUM.

LORD, help Thy servants when they are in sorrow,
Lift up thę hearts so heavily cast down ;
Let not a fear of what may come to-morrow
Give this day's darkness a still deeper frown.

But let the clouds of grief distil sweet showers,
The torn and ploughed-up heart to fertilize,
So faith, truth, courage, and the fragrant flowers
Of love and patience, from the soil may rise.

Lord, help Thy servants struggling with temptation;
Lift them from out the miry ways of sin,
Though stubborn pride, and vain self-elevation,
Heed not the small still voice of God within.

Teach them to tread down eager-eyed ambition
That looks to dazzling heights of worldly fame ;
And make them seek, with heavenly intuition,
Honor and glory worth a life-long aim.

Lord, help Thy servants in their daily duty ;
Let not the love of soft, beguiling sleep,

Of ease, of dreaming idle dreams of beauty,
In fumes of indolence their spirits steep.

Teach them, whatever be their chosen labor,
To do it faithfully, with all their might ;
To let the love of God and of their neighbor
Illume all motives of inferior light.

Yes, help Thy servants, Saviour, we implore Thee ;
And when steered safely o'er life's stormy flood,
Let them be numbered with Thy saints in glory,
Redeemed, like them, with Thy most precious
blood.

THE COMFORT OF CHRIST'S MIRACLES.

I.

(CLEANSING.)

DID not the leper come to Thee,
With pitiable mien,
Acknowledging, on bended knee,
"Lord, Thou canst make me clean"?

And didst Thou make him wait awhile?
Or, didst Thou sternly say—
Approach me not, thou art too vile,—
And coldly turn away?

No, no! Thou didst attend his cry,
And instant succor yield:
"I will, be clean,"—Thou didst reply.
And he at once was healed.

Then, O my Lord, shall I implore
And urge my suit in vain?
Shall I so helpless, sin-sick, sore,
In such sad plight remain?

No, no! Thou art as gracious now,
As instant with Thy aid,

As when, upon the leper's brow,
Thy healing touch was laid.

And so my cry shall still be heard,
Until I feel within,
The quickening power of Thy sweet word
To cleanse my soul from sin.

THE COMFORT OF CHRIST'S MIRACLES.

II.

(STRENGTH IN OBEDIENCE.)

JESUS, who healèd all who came
With their complaints to Him,
The blind, the lunatic, the lame,
The man of palsied limb,—
A vitalizing power conferred
By uttering a simple word.

Looking around upon the set
Of Pharisees and scribes,
Who, in the synagogue, had met
With censures and with gibes,
To catch His words, His deeds to scan,
Who called Himself the Son of man :

Meeting the subtle face of each,
And reading each dark thought,
He turned, with clear and gracious speech,
To him whose cure He sought,
Who, shunning notice, shrank apart,
A helpless man with hopeless heart.

"Rise up, stand forth," the Master cried ;
The shrinking one obeyed,
And stood amidst the crowd, whose pride
Was watchful to upbraid,
If Christ, by healing, should transgress
Their narrow rules of righteousness.

"Stretch forth thy hand," and instantly,
In stretching out, the hand
Was made whole like the other, free
To use at Christ's command !
The fetters of disease were riven,
Strength in obedience was given.

And so, when bowed down and deprest
By crushing weights of care,
There comes to thee a high behest
To rise, and do, and dare,—
Put forth thy hand, at once obey,
Freedom and strength shall clear thy way.

THE COMFORT OF CHRIST'S MIRACLES.

III.

(SAFETY IN DANGER.)

AT evening-fall the winds began to rise,
And the dark clouds hung low,
So that the stars, which lit the upper skies,
Could not their help bestow.

And soon the fretted surface of the sea
Tossed foaming waves on high ;
And with a voice of fearful majesty
Answered the winds' loud cry.

And in the midst of this tumultuous gale,
A little ship was tossed,
And the brave men therein began to quail,
And think the ship was lost.

But, presently, approaching through the storm
A gleaming light drew near,
And as it nearer drew, they saw a form
Walking the waters drear !

The faint disciples, all their fancies stirred,
Trembled and were dismayed ;

When their dear Master's well-known voice was heard,
'Tis I: be not afraid.

Then Peter, venturesome and ardent, cried,
Lord, let me come to Thee!
And quickly o'er the reeling vessel's side
Leapt in the surging sea.

But, ah, the waves gave way as soon as trod :
They were no solid floor
For any but the Christ, the Son of God,
Who stilled their wild uproar.

He, the supreme Deliverer, was close by
When Peter, at the brink
Of yawning danger, uttered the loud cry,
Lord, save me, or I sink!

His mighty hand at once was stretched to save ,
And when the tempest heard
The Saviour's voice, the strife of wind and wave
Ceased at the gracious word.

O heart, with sorrow sick, and tossed about
On life's rough sea alone,
Why art thou fearful, wherefore dost thou doubt,
Why dost thou weep and moan?

Dry thy sad eyes, and look, a glorious Form
Is walking towards thee,

To hold thee up amid the raging storm,
And calm the troubled sea.

It is the Saviour ! Hear Him softly say,
Be of good cheer, 'tis I.

Look, the black clouds are vanishing away
And day-dawn gilds the sky !

THE COMFORT OF CHRIST'S MIRACLES.

IV.

"And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you? They say unto Him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened."—MATT. xx. 33.

IT was the Christ that passed along
The high-road to the holy city :
Surrounded by a surging throng,
For whom His mighty love and pity
Had wrought a hundred-fold relief :
Bringing to life the widow's son,
Chasing demoniac rage and grief
For many a heart-stricken one.

Two blind men sitting by the way,
Hearing that Christ was close beside them,
And feeling a bold faith to pray
A prayer that could not be denied them,
"Have mercy on us, Lord !" they cried,
"O Son of David, pass not by";
Many rebuked them in harsh pride,
But still, "Have mercy, Lord !" they cry.

Then Jesus called them, and stood still,
So runs the sweet and gracious story,

And gently asked them what their will ;
 They, beggars—He, the Lord of glory !
 “ O Son of David, dark our night,
 Blind, poor, and sorrowful are we ;
Lord, that we may receive our sight,
 Is the dear boon we beg of Thee.”

“ So Jesus had compassion ”: when,
 When is His pity e'er withholden ?
 And on those two blind, helpless men,
 He shed His sunlight clear and golden.
 How glad those eyes whose vision first
 Rested upon His face, and saw
 The love that had their clouds dispersed
 And filled their souls with grateful awe.

O Thou, who art the same to-day,
 As when those blind men sought Thy blessing,
 Wilt Thou not hear me while I pray,
 My sin-beclouded state confessing ?
 I want to seek the things above,
 From all earth's petty cares to rise ;
 But, Lord, without Thy touch of love,
 I cannot even lift my eyes.

REJOICING.

"Ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto."—DEUT. xii. 7.

"Rejoice with them that do rejoice."—ROM. xii. 15.

"Rejoice in the Lord alway, and again I say rejoice."—PHIL. iv. 4.

COMING across the crystal sea
From the fair, far-off land,
I hear this beautiful decree,
This love-imbued command ;
Uttered in accents of a Father's voice,
"Rejoice in all things, evermore rejoice."

Thou shalt rejoice in all thy tasks ;
The labor of the day,
Whether incessant toil it asks,
Or work as light as play,
Be it hard need, at variance with choice,
Thou shalt not sigh or murmur, but rejoice.

What though success may be denied
To all thy various works,
That boon would nourish hungry pride
That ever near thee lurks,
And dull, perchance, the sunshine of that joy
Which should give life to every hour's employ.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice :
Honor and fame may be
Given to thy friend, the public voice
Chanting his eulogy ;
Forget thy failure in that joy of his,
And add thy wreath to crown his victories.

What though beloved ones must die,
And leave life lone and drear ;
What if, with cold inconstancy,
Some change, who were most dear ?
God changes not ; oh, lift thy heart above,
And drink the joy of God's unchanging love.

What though death stares thee in the face
And stops thy beating heart ?
Then, every sorrow flies apace,
Then instantly thou art
With Him in glory, whose beloved voice
Bids thee in all things evermore rejoice.

JUSTICE AND LOVE.

"Love is the fulfilling of the law."—ROM. xiii. 10.

THE Law, with brow and voice austere,
Full of forbiddings to free will,
Cries—No man can be safe from fear
Who does not all my words fulfill.

If in one single point alone
My code of morals he transgress,
I count the whole as overthrown,
And judge him in stern righteousness.

O Justice ! right and true thou art,
With tender sweetness Love replies,
While yearning pity moves her heart,
And beams in beauty from her eyes :

Have patience while I tell to thee
What I have heard with wondering awe ;
I am, by heaven, proclaimed to be
The sole fulfiller of the law.

O Justice ! dost thou ask me *how* ?
It is by entering men's souls,

When they at once in reverence bow
To Him who heaven and earth controls.

Their grateful love to God is such,
They grudge Him not the one seventh day ;
Nor think they worship Him too much,
If every hour they homage pay.

Adoring God with soul and strength,
Their loving nature so expands
That all the world they love, at length,
And so break none of Thy commands.

With angry thoughts they murder not ; ,
Nor steal from any, love or fame,
With jealous words, that leave a blot
Upon an innocent, fair name.

And covetous envy never dares
To enter where I rule and reign ;
Mingling her fecund noisome tares,
With the pure wheat of my domain.

Thus I alone the law fulfill,
And prove my mission from above,
By moulding spirits to the will
Of Him who is both Law and Love.

FERVENT PRAISE.

"Because Thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee."—PSALM lxiii. 3.

O PUT a new song in my mouth, dear Lord,
Make musical the love that does so long
To burst its bonds, and, with a full accord,
Utter its praise to Thee in sweetest song.

Thou dwellest midst the praise of angels bright,
Of happy spirits, by Thy will made swift
To wing their way on missions of delight,
Bringing to earth full many a heavenly gift.

And sweet their praise beyond what we can guess ;
Yet dost Thou mark when lowly hearts aspire ;
And, with a keen and throbbing thankfulness,
Wish they could sing like the angelic choir.

Perchance, ev'n now, one of Thy ministers
Of flaming fire, unseen, approaches me,
And with his quickening breath, kindles and stirs
The struggling soul of love-born harmony.

Thy love, O God, surrounds me everywhere ;
I see it in that blue and perfect sky ;
I taste it in the pure fresh morning air,
And hear it in the wind that passes by.

Thy love has given these guardians, old and gray,
The stately trees that stand and watch me here ;
Which, beautiful in summer, yet display
More lines of marvellous grace, in winter drear.

Like good, true men, whom bleak adversity
Has robbed of friends and honors—counted such—
Whose noble strength, and graceful symmetry,
Of faith and virtue, sorrow could not touch.

Thy love, dear Lord, within my home has set
Signs of Thy condescending care and thought ;
Though solitude is sad sometimes, yet—yet
Thy love in all things round me is inwrought.

With daily benefits Thou loadest me !
I shut mine eyes, and hear with memory's ear
Soft voices, far across the severing sea,
Of friends whom Thou hast made so true and dear.

I open them, and lo ! I here behold
Voices made visible by ink and pen,
In letters, changing not nor waxing cold,
Trusted, appealed to, o'er and o'er again.

All sweet affection unto Thee I trace,
Whether from far, or waiting nearer by ;
Thy name is LOVE, Thou art love's dwelling-place,
And thither would my fervent praises fly.

CHRIST'S LESSON OF LOVE.

“ Jesus washeth the disciples' feet, and exhorteth them to humility and charity.”—*Heading of St. John's 13th chapter.*

JESUS, Master, have I been
Ever washed by Thee from sin,—
By those tender hands of Thine,
Whose least touch, with power divine,
Can restore the stricken soul,
Re-establish and make whole?

If I have not, how can I
Learn Thy sweet humility ;
Copy fair Thy love, and show
Love like Thine to friend and foe ;
Live unblemished, without spot,
If Thy dear hands wash me not?

Simon Peter Thee forbade ;
Questioning, with wonder sad,
Why his Master and his Friend,
Should so strangely condescend,
To an office so unmeet,
As to wash His followers' feet !

Then the solemn words were said,
Filling with a sudden dread

The astonished Peter's heart,—
"If I wash thee not, no part
Hast thou with me ; nor canst thou
Know what I am doing now."

Quickly changed was Peter's tone—
"Lord, oh, not my feet alone !
Wash my hands, and wash my head,
Let the water freely shed
Show me that I have a part
In Thee, Sovereign of my heart."

Peter's cry, dear Lord, is mine,
Show me that I now am Thine :
Wash my feet, that strong they may
Without slipping tread Thy way ;
Ready, roughest paths to run,
In the storm, or in the sun.

Wash my hands, that they may hold
All life's duties manifold,
Working with a quiet power
Tasks Thou settest for the hour ;
Looking up alone to Thee
For the rules of charity.

Wash my head, that in the brain
Whence the clues of thought obtain,
No insidious disease,
No fine cobweb sophistries,

May entangle or prevent
Powers for noblest uses sent.

Wash my heart, Lord, for therein
Is the source of every sin.
Purge it of its clinging pride,
Then its issues, like a tide
Flowing from the fount above,
Will be love,—and only love !

DOUBT DEPRECATED.

“ Lord, I believe ; help Thou mine unbelief.”—**MARK ix. 24.**

LORD, take away my doubts, the deepest source
Of all upspringing restlessness and strife !
I would not doubt God rules, with tender force,
The tidal waves that toss man's little life
That seems near wrecking on a dangerous reef :
Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.

I would not doubt God hears and answers prayer ;
Though strong men, wise and good, are borne
away,
And they live on, whose lives we well could spare,
Bringing to us and to themselves each day
An added weight to an o'erburdened grief :
Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.

I would not doubt God looks with watchful eye
And pitying care upon man's sufferings ;
That His quick ear notes the unnoticed sigh ;
Or that His flail of tribulation brings
Good corns of wheat from sorrow's full-eared sheaf;
Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.

O question not the Cause of good or ill,
For querulous distrust brings danger near ;
But calm thy heart, and hush thy restless will,
In that all-perfect love that "casts out fear";
But urging this—of all thy prayers the chief—
Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.

UNCERTAINTY.

"For who can tell when (or how) it shall be?"—ECCLES. viii. 7.

OH, how will the spirit-messenger come,
To take us away to our final home?
Unsought—of a sudden? or will he say,
I am certain to come on such a day?

Will he come on the crest of a surging wave,
And plunge us down to a fathomless grave?
Will our funeral music only be
The wailing dirge of the wind and the sea?

Will he come in flames of devouring fire,
Choking our life out in agony dire?
Ashes to ashes, just whispered in dread,
Dust to dust, o'er unrecognized dead!

Will he come in the dark of a sleepless night,
With a piercing pang, and feverish fright?
Will he stop our pulse in the breathless gloom,
And steal us away from our silent room?

O God, Thou knowest: but we only know
He is Thy messenger, sudden or slow;
Then, oh, for his coming prepare us all,
Let us gladly answer when he shall call.

GREAT GAIN.

"Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."—1 TIM. vi. 6, 7.

THE gain I crave is not
Of silver or of gold ;
Nor house, nor landed lot
Of meadow, wood, or wold ;
Nor even the sweet wealth
Of precious human love,
Though neither strength nor health,
That boon I prize above.

The gain I seek is this :
A perfect confidence—
Full of a quiet bliss
Pervading soul and sense—
That God is my own God,
My refuge and my home ;
His ruling staff and rod
My guide where'er I roam :

That Christ is ever near,
To hold my heart to Him,
When mists of sin or fear
The sight of faith bedim ;

To satisfy my need
With love that never ends,
To prove Himself, indeed,
My first, my best of friends.

This will *contentment* bring,
And will not fail to bless,
Though riches all take wing ;
Though world-adored success
Comes never more to mark
Life's work with golden star ;
Though desolate and dark
All worldly prospects are.

Contentment brightens all ;
Adds joy in joyful days,
And gives a cheery call
The downcast eyes to raise,
Bidding them upward look,
And round upon the earth,
And find in Nature's book
A fresh and harmless mirth.

Contentment is itself
A mine of richer ore
Than can be coined for pelf,
Or hid in miser's store.
And still the more we get,
And give with generous hands,
The more there will be yet
To answer all demands.

Contentment loves to dwell
Beneath the lowly roof,
All murmurs to dispel,
And keep distrust aloof ;
Blesses the simple meal,
Praises the plain attire ;
No heart with her can feel
One covetous desire.

Of this great gain I crave
A heritor to be ;
'Tis certain that the grave
Cannot steal this from me !
With all else I must part ;
But I can take above
The wealth of soul and heart,
Given by the Lord of love.

PRAYER FOR SAFE KEEPING.

“My eyes from tears ; my feet from falling ; my soul from death.”

LORD, send Thy angel of compassion
To keep mine eyes from tears !
For oh, in what a varied fashion
Grief every day appears ;
Now in a startling dread affright,
Now still and shadowy as night.

Lord, keep my feet from falling ; send me
Some angel to uphold,
With unseen presence to defend me,
E'en as Thy word has told,
Freeing my path from any snare
That might lie hidden unaware.

And, Lord, be Thou my full salvation,
And with Thy Spirit's breath
Scatter the mists of dark temptation,
To keep my soul from death ;
Let Thy pure life within me, gain
A victory over grief and pain.

GOD'S LESSON OF PAIN.

"He withdraweth not His eyes from the righteous:—and if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in cords of affliction, *then He sheweth them their work.*"—JOB xxxvi. 8, 9.

O TELL me, wherefore is it, my Lord,
That in fetters Thou bindest me,
And holdest me with the knotted cord
Of nerve-thrilling agony?

Alas! do I hear Thee sternly say—
"It is to show thee thy work,
To make thee see, in the light of day,
Where sloth and negligence lurk.

"How hast thou lingered in idle dreams,
True thinking a task undone;
Inactive thy brain, where fancy teems
With victories never won!

"Look deep in thy heart where Evil lies,
How hast thou pampered the foe;
What earthly desires and vanities
Have driven thee to and fro!

"Look at thy industries ; what thy aim,
If thy fingers deftly wrought ?
Nought but thy own dear credit and fame,
For Me and My honor nought.

"Look at thy charities ; how much care
Or of sympathetic pain,
Went with the gold and the garments fair,
Where want and misery reign ?

"What hast thou ever rendered to Me,
For the joys with health imbued ?
Look through the leaves of thy memory
And mourn thy ingratitude.

"Now learn the lesson, and take the gift
Entwined with these cords of pain :
If learned, these fetters I will uplift,
And set thee all free again."

Ah, Lord, I lie prostrate in the dust
Of self-aborrence and shame ;
Teach me the lesson, or fail I must,
Of reaching its heavenly aim.

SPIRITUAL FIRE.

“It is not time we want, but fire.”—REV. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

PREACHER of fervid eloquence,
That thought of thine comes home to me,
And in its depth my needs I see !
O for the living fire of God
To sweep across my heart's dry sod,
And clear the soil, where dark and dense
Grow brier and thorn and idle tare,
That choke all good growth unaware.

It is not time I want, but fire ;
Not only to consume away
All that so fills me with dismay,
But to give *heat* to torpid powers
Too cold to grasp the fleeting hours,
And make them yield at my desire
The treasures better far than gold,
Which life's neglected minutes hold.

Fire is the boon for which I pine ;
Not only to give heat, but *light*,
To make the upward footpath bright ;
To shine with full, unwavering blaze
Over life's labyrinthine maze
Where mists and mysteries intertwine ;

Light to make every step so clear
That I may walk without a fear.

“Spirit of burning,” * dwell with me ;
Or, like the sluggard’s thorny field,
No fruit or flower my soul shall yield !
Spirit of heat, my cold heart warm ;
Spirit of light, my way inform,
Through all its length my Guardian be,
And when it ends, O waft me higher,
Purged, purified, refined by fire !

* Isaiah iv. 4.

THE THREE-FOLD PLEDGE.

"If ye abide in me ;
And my words abide in you ;
Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

—ST. JOHN xv. 7.

PART I.

"If ye abide in me."

"IF ye abide in me !"
Then, dear Lord, can there be
A doubt that we should from Thee go,
When such a grant is given,
To make the Lord of heaven
Our dwelling-place, our home below ?

O Lord, I would not miss
Of such a boon as this,
For all earth's honors, or its wealth :
For leaning on Thy breast
My pardoned soul finds rest,
And joy, and holiness, and health.

It is my dear delight,
To know that in Thy sight
I live and act from hour to hour ;

That, open as the day,
My very thoughts, alway
Are read by Thine omniscient power.

And yet I know full well,
That more than I can tell,
Yes, countless as the seashore sands,
Are sins of crimson dye
All naked to Thine eye,
Deserving justice at Thy hands.

The unforeseen mistakes
About which conscience wakes
Long after, with a strange surprise ;
These messengers of woe,
I also fully know
Act openly before Thine eyes

But since I may "abide"
Close to Thy sheltering side
And make my home within Thy heart,—
No sin, nor shame, nor grief
Can fail of sure relief
Or force me from my home to part.

PART II.

"And my words abide in you."

THY words, through all my life,
Have been my peace in strife,
My only joy in lonely woe ;
They have been more to me
Than sweet society,
When youth and hope were all aglow.

They are more precious far
Than old-time letters are,
That kindled in my soul such fire,
When faithful friendship seemed
Fairer than fond hope dreamed,
Dearer than warm youth could desire.

And now, when days are drear,
The Tempter drawing near,
And daring me my faith to prove,—
I look within and find,
Deep in my heart and mind,
Thy word, that never shall remove.

No ! there they shall *abide*,
Like the warm vital tide
That pulses through my every vein
Until this heart-beat stops,
And this frail body drops,
Dead evermore to sin and pain !

Engraven there, I trace
Rich promises of grace,
Uttered long since by Thy dear voice ;
Yet fresh as when at first
Their living waters burst
On hearts that could not else rejoice.

Away then, doubt and care,
Thy words to me declare,—
Lo, I am with thee to the end ;
With thee in gain or loss,
With thee in every cross,
Thy Rest, thy Refuge, and thy Friend.

PART III.

“Ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

IF I will, then, Thou wilt
Take away all my guilt,
And make my record in Thy book,
So spotless and so white,
That angels, pure and bright,
And God Himself thereon may look.

If I will, then, Thou wilt
Show that Thy blood was spilt
For sinners of as deep a dye

As ever grieved the Love
That brought Thee from above ;
Therefore, for sinners such as I.

If I will, then, my prayers,
Though broken oft with cares,
Thou'lt hear and answer to life's close ;
Grief shall no more distress,
And sins that I confess,
Shall break no more my sweet repose.

If I will, then wilt Thou
Show me that, even now,
I have forever safely passed
Into that life divine,
Which faith in Thee makes mine,
The life that shall forever last.

If I will, then wilt Thou
Write Thy name on my brow
In letters of such purity,
That when my last foe, Death,
Shall come to take my breath,
He'll read that I belong to Thee.

All this I know ; for here
'Tis like a sunbeam clear,—
It is a beam from Thee, Great Sun !
“If ye abide in me ;
And my words dwell in thee,
Ask what ye will, it shall be done.”

"MY FAITH LOOKS UP TO THEE."

(RAY PALMER.)

MANY there are who bless Ray Palmer,
Even though they know him not :
Praying that still his lot
On earth may be as calm, or calmer
As it draws near its close,
As full of blest repose,
As free from discord, sorrow, tears,
As it has been for more than seventy years.

I read about his "golden wedding,"
The poet, whose sweet songs
Make vocal many tongues
Who would God's praise be ever spreading ;
And in this time of year,
October, sad and dear,
Tender with many-tinted haze,
Like mingled memories of by-gone days—


There comes to me a recollection
Of an October day
Far in the past away ;
When, linked by holiest affection,
(250)

Bright with unclouded youth,
And open-eyed to truth,
We walked, a happy band, with one
Whose saintly work on earth was well-nigh done.

The radiant sunset, richly glowing,
Reddened the golden trees ;
Soft was the southern breeze,
And musical the wild stream flowing
Through the lone, silent wood,
Suiting the thoughtful mood
Induced by counsel, rarely given,
From one whose joy was leading souls to heaven.

And as we stood there grouped together,
"Come, let us sing," said he,
"*My faith looks up to Thee ;*
And let us make it certain, whether,
When ends life's transient dream,
We each can face death's stream,
And know that we shall meet above,
Ransomed, made perfect through a Saviour's love,"

And now I never sing those verses,
But present is the past ;
For Time, that flies so fast,
Never their influence sweet disperses ;
And Faith with loving eye
Looks far beyond the sky,
And sees the dear ones lost below,
Dwelling in bliss that earth can never know.



READY.

"Be ye also ready : for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."—MATT. xxiv. 44.

O TO be ready for the time
When Jesus Christ shall send
An angel from the upper clime
To tell me life must end.

So ready—that all petty cares
Shall cease to agitate ;
And sorrow melt off in the airs
That blow beyond heaven's gate.

So ready—that I crave no more
Life's joys or gifts to claim ;
Ev'n friendship's balm, or scholars' lore,
Or poets' heart-won fame.

So ready—that no fear of sin
May shake my steadfast faith :
Feeling that Christ, my heart within
Destroys the sting of death.

So ready—that no voice most dear,
No face beloved, may come
(252)

To intercept the vision clear
Of my approaching home.

So ready—that to live alone,
And all alone to die,
May make the Saviour more my own,
More close in soul-knit tie.

I would my “house in order” set ;
That no entangling thrall,
No broken vow, no grudge, no debt,
May fright me at His call.

For at His voice, *that unknown day*,
I would as gladly run,
As children hasten out to play
When all their tasks are done.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"This spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive."—JOHN vii. 39.

WITH humble faith I bow,
Confessing, Lord, that Thou
Art Jesus Christ,—Immanuel ;—
The God whose piercing sight—
The very Light of light—
Can search through earth and heaven and hell.

I know Thou art God-Man ;
Who pitifully can
Feel for Thy fellow-men below ;
How oftentimes they grope,
Without a gleam of hope
To cheer them in this world of woe :

But if they can make out
To see, through darkling doubt,
This lamp of promise, clear and bright,
Then do they smile again,
Like brave and hopeful men,
Knowing its rays will guide them right.

Lord Jesus, I believe !
And if Thou dost perceive
This feeble faith is genuine,
Then give, not as reward,
But for Thy truth's sake, Lord,
The Spirit as my Guide within.

What, but the Holy Ghost,
Can dissipate the host
Of fluttering thoughts and phantasies
That tax the fretted brain,—
Though purposeless and vain—
The “vanity of vanities !”

O Son of God ! I know
Thy Spirit can bestow
Soundness of mind, and steadfastness ;
So that each separate power
Receives a new-born dower,
And each the other serves to bless.

Thy Spirit can control
The yearnings of the soul,
Or soothe them with serene content ;
Can keep the inner life,
Apart from storm and strife,
Though troubles all around ferment.

Thy Spirit gives a taste
Of that to which we haste
On soaring wings of rapid Time ;

256 *THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.*

The perfect peace and love,
The joy that reigns above,
Untainted by this earthly clime.

Lord Jesus, I believe !
Then let me now receive
This gift, all blessed gifts in one ;
And ever, evermore,
I'll worship and adore
The Father, Spirit, and the Son.

MY ALL IN ALL.

" Jesus, my Shepherd, Husband, Friend,
My Prophet, Priest, and King."—*Old Hymn.*

JESUS! Thou seekest on bleak mountains
And through the deserts bare,
To lead thy straying flock to fountains
And pastures full and fair :
Thou art my Shepherd, I Thy wand'ring sheep,
Wilt Thou not in safe fold my footsteps keep ?

Jesus, the life I live is lonely,
No relatives, not one,
With faithful heart to claim mine only,
None to protect me, none ;
Thou art my Husband, and my vows are Thine,
Wilt Thou not solace me with love divine ?

Jesus, friends have I, but they're mortal ;
They die, or live afar
Over the sea,—beyond death's portal,
Some of the dearest are :
Thou art my Friend, born for the days of trouble,
Oh ! let Thy tokens to my soul redouble.

Jesus, there are who fate foretelling,
Vex with untoward wit ;
And I, sometimes, on visions dwelling,
Am wrapped in gloomy fit :
Thou art my Prophet, who my past has scanned,
And all my future times are in Thy hand.

Jesus, there are who make confession
To human priests of sin ;
And, closeted in secret session,
Hope for redress therein :
Thou art my Priest, to Thy pure shrine I go,
And pour out all my sin, and want, and woe.

Jesus, I would be ever loyal,
Subject to Thy control ;
And underneath Thy sway most royal
Throw down my heart and soul :
Thou art my King, and at Thy feet I fall,
For ruling, blessing, pardon—all in all.

“WHO GETS UP FIRST TO PRAY?”

“I remember hearing of a man who believed that he had a guardian spirit who awoke him every morning with the audible words, *Who gets up first to pray?*”—JOHN INGLESANT.

WHO gets up first to pray :
Hear'st thou this voice, my soul?
How fast thy moments roll—
The night has turned to day,
And art thou still asleep?
Break from thy slumbers deep
And cast thy dreams away.

Who gets up first to pray :
Who questions this of thee?
One, it perchance may be,
Who holdeth hidden sway
Over thy spirit's powers,
Over thy unwatched hours,
Their secret worth to weigh.

Who gets up first to pray :
Before the quiet halls
Echo with quick footfalls ;
Before the twilight gray

260 *"WHO GETS UP FIRST TO PRAY?"*

Scatters the shadowy gloom,
And, by degrees, makes room
For the first sunrise ray ?

Who gets up first to pray :
First, before all affairs,
Whether of joys or cares,
Of duties sad or gay ;
First, before dress or food ;
Who seeks the highest good,
God's guidance for the day ?

Who gets up first to pray :
Naming the names most dear
Of friends, far off or near ;
Thus keeping from decay
Affection that might change,
Love that might elsewhere range
And fondest hopes bewray ?

Who gets up first to pray :
Whoever does shall find,
Through heart and soul and mind,
Fresh streams of vigor play ;
He shall be calm and strong
'Mid pain, or grief, or wrong,
Who rises first to pray.

THAT THIEF.

"Procrastination is the thief of time."

—YOUNG'S "NIGHT THOUGHTS."

IF it were only time he stole,
That thief with the long name—
The loss would still despoil the soul,
And tarnish it with shame.

But peace of conscience is the prize,
The dearest and the chief,
That he lays hold of as he flies,
That still uncaptured thief.

This robbery is utter woe,
It haunts us with the thought
That chance is gone, that joy laid low,
That plan has come to nought.

Our courage, too, he steals away ;
We shrink with causeless dread,
As if a lion* held at bay
The path we ought to tread ;

* Proverbs xxvi. 13.

And so we enter not the road,
Where beckoning duties wait
With strength adapted to each load,
If we are not too late.

Oh, passive dreamer, wake at length ;
Let not *that thief* go on
Stealing thy time, thy peace, thy strength,
Until thy all is gone !

TO MY S. S. CHILDREN.

"Come, ye children, hearken unto me, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord."—PSALM xxxiv. 11.

COME, little children, and hear me tell,
What the Lord hath done, who loves you well.

Away in the far-off ages back,
He rolled the sun on its golden track.

And He lit the moon with its silver light,
To make a picture of darksome night :

And the kindly stars, that above us smile,
When the moon is hidden for a while.

And He made the sea, with its ebb and flow,
Where floating cities pass to and fro.

And the Lord of all this world so fair,
Makes the four seasons, for us to share.

The Spring with its blossoms, pink and white,
Like the cheeks of children to charm the sight ;

And the song of birds to bless the ear,
Robins and thrushes, with carols clear.

The Summer with long delicious days,
Yet short for our meed of love and praise ;

Short for the fruits, and the fragrant flowers,
That only live in the Summer hours.

And Autumn sweet, with its southwest wind,
And colors gay as the silks of Ind.

And Winter, flashing with diadems
Of icicles, bright as royal gems.

The Lord has given us this wondrous earth,
To value at its most precious worth.

But love and value it as we may,
Sooner or later, death ends our stay.

So the dear Lord in His love and grace
Has bought us a true abiding-place.

And what, think you, children, did it cost
To buy in heaven, what on earth was lost ?

Our dear Lord's life was the sacrifice,
His own heart's blood the precious price.

Then, children, never forget the thought
Of all our beloved Lord has wrought ;

But give Him your hearts' warm trust and love,
And you shall live in His home above,

The last, best home of the Good and True,
Beyond this beautiful sky of blue.

HAPPINESS.

A GROUP of noble trees stands here
Before my cottage door,
And on a bough that reaches near
The upper chamber floor
There sits and sings a merry thrush ;
No song could sweeter be ;
And as he sings he brings a gush
Of happiness to me.

For in his song he tells of One
Who made him thus to sing ;
Who knows, beneath the summer sun,
Each smallest living thing :
Whose searching eyes run to and fro
Upon the earth, and see
Where best the strength and love to show
Of His infinity.

O blessed God, Thou lovest best,
Within this world so fair,
The humble, contrite hearts that rest
Upon Thy world-wide care ;
(266)

Who, even when they weep with grief,
Can look up in Thy face,
Waiting Thy smile to give relief ;
Thy time, for patient grace.

There are—who of their fancies form
A phantom Happiness,
And after that, through sun or storm,
With idle haste they press.
Some make it of expected gold ;
But, ere their fortunes come,
Death's sudden winter turns them cold,
And drops them in the tomb.

Some follow hard a beckoning Fame,
And study, day and night,
Her shining laurel-wreaths to claim
With an established right ;
But, ah, she fails the strongest hope !
The mingled breaths of men
Just blow the bubble Honor up,
To dash it down again.

Some think that, by a change of place,
They surely will possess
This phantom of their constant chase,
This wingèd Happiness.
And so they cross the seas, and live
In far-off lands, but find
That foreign homes can never give
This boon to heart or mind.

The simplest pleasures are most sweet,
Like the fresh smell of grass
Now falling at the mower's feet ;
Or, like the winds that pass
And greet you with the fragrant grace
Of many a honied flower
That in some green, fern-shaded place
Live out their little hour.

To win the prize, we never must
Make joy our only goal ;
But if, with quiet, steadfast trust,
And self-forgetting soul,
We make God's will our daily thought,
Duty our daily care,
Then Happiness will come unsought,
An angel unaware.

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS.

“**D**ARKNESS and light are both alike to Thee”:
Oft when I waken in the midnight deep,
This truth—so grand, so joyful,—comes to me
With thoughts more soothing than the dreams of
sleep.

Those myriad stars, brighter than burnished gold,
That trace their beauty o’er the purple dome
In clustered forms, are harmonized, controlled,
By Him who has amid the heavens His home.

He calls the stars by name, and yet descends
To visit man, and succor human need ;
Nay more—He dwells with contrite hearts, and bends
A patient ear when for His love they plead.

Sorrow is darkness, but His love can make
That darkness light about us, if He will ;
And if He wills not, surely for His sake,
We can bear storms of sorrow, and be still.

And there is heavier, deeper gloom than grief ;
But, oh, what light may fall upon its shade,
When He, who came to save the very chief
Of guilty sinners, is our Refuge made.

Dangers lie darkly hidden round our path ;
And yet no chilling dread of sudden fright,
From robbers rude, or elemental wrath,
Can hurt the soul laid open to God's sight.

For raging blast, and zephyr's breath of balm,
Are sent, and timed by Him, from hour to hour ;
The furious winter storm, the summer calm,
Are both obedient servants to His power.

Death and the grave are dark and cold, but lo,
A new and wondrous light illumines them ;
It fills death's valley with a sunrise glow,
The day-dawn of the New Jerusalem.

"IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS."

1 THESS. v. 18.

KEEP not thy thanks alone for hours
When the blue sky is bright,
And the air redolent with flowers
That laugh in sunny light.

But offer thanks amid dark storms ;
When winds blow keen and high,
And beat upon the fragile forms
That charm thy loving eye.

Give thanks when some fresh bounty calls
Thy heart to leap for joy ;
Give thanks when some strange sorrow falls,
Thy day-dreams to destroy.

For friendship's love and trust give thanks ;
And yet, withhold them not,
If time should thin love's blessed ranks,
And lonely be thy lot.

When health is glowing in thy veins,
And beaming from thine eye,

272 *"IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS."*

Sing forth thy gratitude in strains
Of unchecked liberty.

But should thy outer freedom be
Fettered a while by pain,
Still, search thy mind and soul, and see
What mercies yet remain.

"In everything give thanks!" My heart,
Should joy or grief, to-day,
Bid songs arise, or salt tears start,—
Remember, and obey.

BY DAY AND BY NIGHT.

WHEN stars grow pale in day-dawn light,
And herald clouds, in red and gold,
Come springing up with banners bright,
The glorious sunrise to unfold,
To Thee I lift my prayer and song,
Thou Day-star of heaven's shining throng.

When winds begin to blow, and rain
Dulls the pure color of the morn,
Storms cannot check the grateful strain
That from my heart of hearts is borne ;
To Thee I lift my song and prayer,
In rain and shine, in joy and care.

When stars grow bright again, as day
Drops down the portals of the sky,
And o'er the arch of purple gray
Those beaming orbs keep watch on high,
To Thee I lift my prayer and song,
To whom sun, moon, and stars belong.

JOY.

"But headlong joy is ever on the wing."—MILTON.

OH, Joy, most dear and sweet,
Why dost thou haste away,
Why do thy visits fleet
Like blossoms of the May?
So dearly, dearly do we love thee,
What do we ever prize above thee!

Thy smile is full of light,
Thy voice of melody,
They both enchain us quite
With their rare witchery;
Our hearts beat quick to keep and hold thee
Within our arms, and there enfold thee.

But oh, thou art, indeed,
So changeable, so coy;
Thou dost so oft mislead
Our longing hopes, dear Joy;
They trust, like children, thy sweet promise,
And dream not thou canst vanish from us.

Ah, Milton, thou wert right :

"Forever on the wing"

Is Joy, the aery sprite,

Who does a moment bring

The rapture which from heaven he borrows,

And then—commends us to earth's sorrows.

FIVE POINTS.*

ORDER, HARMONY, COURAGE, FAITH, AND LOVE.

HOW beautiful is ORDER, and how glad
The house must be that holds her as its queen !
She rules the time, a punctual hour is had
For diligent work, for games that intervene,
For exercise, food, prayer, and sleep serene :
Nor rules she time alone, but every place;
All rooms and their appointments, bear the sheen
Of nicest care : for Order's searching grace
No hidden nook is too obscure and mean.

What is a household without HARMONY,
Order's twin sister, one in soul and birth !
She drills the children's voices, sets the key
To Sabbath chant and hymn, and play-time mirth;
Wrangling is never heard anear the hearth
Where Harmony presides, but ringing tones,
Of joy and peace, and feelings of like worth ;
She hushes carking discontent, disowns
All discord, makes a little heaven of earth.

* Written for the Five Points House of Industry.

COURAGE has here his home, a brother strong,
He keeps the house when threatening foes arise ;
Truth is the standard that he rears, all wrong,
Injustice, fraud, and cunning he defies ;
His clear keen glance frightens all crooked lies
That cower beneath it, groveling in the dust.
When deadly fevers come, Courage so wise
Stands by the infectious couch with earnest trust,
And points the weary sufferer to the skies.

For in this home ideal FAITH is found,
A sure abiding friend, no transient guest,
She sheds a fragrant atmosphere around ;
Holding sweet promises, like spices pressed,
And the rich Rose of Sharon to her breast ;
Robed in Christ's righteousness, her only pride,
She toils untired, with constant joyful zest,
Showing in whom the sinner may confide,
And bringing outcasts to a haven blest.

But chief amid this home-rule, and most dear,
Is LOVE, the angel of the family !
Love charmed bright Order from a higher sphere ;
Love is the very heart of Harmony ;
Love gives to Courage the one golden key
That can unlock dark doors of sad despair ;
And mighty Love teaches sweet Faith to see
The " things unseen " of Love's own native air.
O happy home where five such guardians be !

THE SINLESS STATE.

“They are without fault before the throne of God.”—REV. xiv. 5.

“**W**ITHOUT fault before the throne !”
Oh, this rapturous thought alone,
Seems to give one wings to fly
Up, beyond this lower sky ;—
Seems to give one sight to view
All the dear ones that we knew,
Standing 'midst the saintly ranks,
Giving the Lord Jesus thanks
That they are, through Him alone,
“Without fault before the throne.”

Shall we ever join them there ?
Oh, it would be dark despair,
Shut out from that sinless throng,
Who can never more do wrong !
But, if here we may possess
Christ's fair robe of righteousness,
He will claim us, when at last
Life and death alike are passed,
And their joy will be our own,
“Without fault before the throne.”

Never more to feel the pain,
Of a throbbing, fevered brain ;
Of a broken heart, all left
Lonely, desolate, bereft :—
Sweet relief like this is given
The inheritors of heaven ;
But oh, infinitely higher,
Filling full the soul's desire,
Is *this* bliss—till then unknown,
“Without fault before the throne.”

No more conflict, sad and sore,
With the inner foes of yore ;
No more indolence and pride,
Or self-loving aims that hide
Under any good deed done ;
No more vagrant thoughts, that run
To the murdering of Time !
O for that dear, heavenly clime,
Whose freed spirits God will own,
“Without fault before the throne.”

UNSHAKEN FAITH.

NOT all the sceptics in the land,
Nor all the "fools" who say
" 'There is no God,' at whose command
We worship or obey,"
Shall shake my firm, rejoicing creed
That God the Lord is God indeed.

Not all the terrible events
That thrill the world with fear,
The wrecks, the fires, the accidents,
That prove death ever near,
Shall loosen my fast-anchored faith
That God is Lord of life and death.

Not all the individual woes
That are my separate share,
The racking pains, the parting throes
That heart from heart must tear,
Shall make me yield my sure belief
That God in love sends pain and grief.

I would not change my faith and hope,
For all the learning brought
To search the wide and varied scope
Of philosophic thought,

If, through such learning, I deny
The Godhead of the Lord most high.

No, no—I cling to the old faith
That God is Nature's King ;
He holds in His own hands the breath
Of every living thing ;
God kills, and makes alive ; and He
Is Lord of immortality.





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